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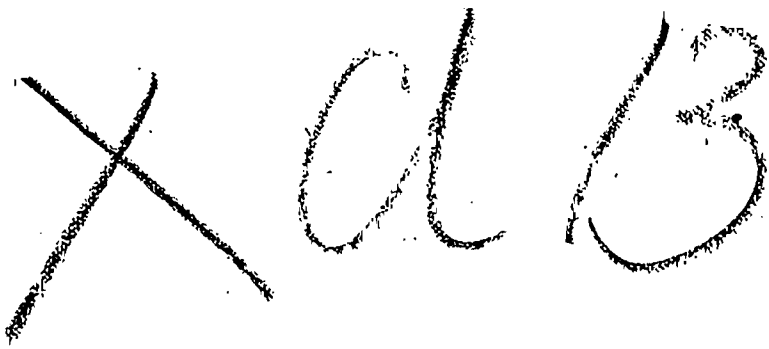

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A SUMMER

IN

THE PYRENEES.

84312

BY THE

HON. JAMES ERSKINE MURRAY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

JOHN MACRONE, ST. JAMES'S SQUARE.

M.DCCC.XXXVII.

84312

JOHN HADDON, CASTLE STREET, FINSBURY.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE are few people who are not aware that The Pyreneés are that chain of mountains which separate France from Spain, extending from the Bay of Biscay on the west, to the Mediterranean on the east; but there are a great many who know little more regarding them than the mere circumstance of their geographical position.

Situated at a great distance from the fashionable route which English tourists almost undeviatingly pursue upon the Continent, the Pyreneés are seldom visited, except by those who care less for going where *every one* goes than for going where *every body* does *not* go; particularly when

the neglected spot has all that can interest to recommend it to notice. But such stragglers from the high road to Germany, to Switzerland, and to Italy, are not numerous; and, of the small number who do, somehow or other, find their way to the Pyreneés, scarcely any of them ever acquire a better knowledge of these mountains, their scenery, and their inhabitants, than can be gleaned by visiting the most frequented watering places, almost all of which are contained within the limits of a single department. Of a range of mountains so extensive as the Pyreneés, where the natural features of one district,—it might almost be said, of one valley,—the language which its inhabitants speak, and their manners and customs,—are essentially different from another, it is physically impossible, from an acquantaince with any one particular part, to form an estimation of the character of the whole.

Aware of this circumstance, and profiting by the opportunity which a residence in the South of France conferred upon him, the Author of the following chapters left Pau (in Bearn) towards the middle of the summer of 1835, with the intention of traversing on foot the Pyrenean

mountains from one extremity to the other. With this view, he travelled *en diligence* by Toulouse and Perpignan to the eastern limits of these mountains; and then, threading his way along their chain, deviating to the right hand, or to the left, as fancy, or more interesting scenes induced him, he fulfilled his intention, and acquired that knowledge of Pyrenean scenery, and Pyrenean peasantry, which personal observation could alone bestow, as there were no English, and,—with the exception of those of the French geological writers,—there were no French works which treated of this subject.

The wilds of the Pyrenean districts, partly from their having been latterly so seldom free from domestic warfare, and partly from the circumstance to which he has alluded, had either hitherto been untrodden by strangers, or, if the foot of any but a native had disturbed their solitudes, the remembrance of it, as far as the author and the public were concerned, had died away with its echo.

In conclusion, the author of these volumes cannot entertain the thought, that they are worthy to fill up the blank which, upon the library shelf

dedicated to works descriptive of European manners and scenery, is, by the present desideratum of a work upon the Pyreneés, left vacant: they are a simple narrative of pedestrian excursions among those mountains, undertaken for amusement, and not with a view to *book-making;* and their only claim upon the notice of the public—that of novelty.

THESE two volumes comprise an account of that great district of the Pyreneés situated between the Mediterranean and the vallée d'Aspe. A third volume, if published, will contain an account of the remaining portion, and of wild sports and adventures in the Basque country.

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TOULOUSE has much to recommend it to the notice of the stranger. In antiquity it ranks above all other towns of France, the era of its foundation being lost in the lapse of ages. As Tolosa it was the most flourishing and magnificent city of the south, in the earliest period of Roman dominion in Gaul, its armies for a long time

baffling their legions. It was the capital of the Tectosagi, a Celtic nation who ravaged Greece in the time of Brennus, two hundred and eighty years before the Christian era; according to Ausonius, it was taken from the Tectosagi by Servilius Cœssius, in the year of Rome, 648. The Visigoth kings afterwards fixed their residence there. At the commencement of the sixth century, Clovis, having defeated Alaric, took possession of Toulouse. The Merovingian princes and Charlemagne retained it till the ninth century and from that period until the time when Philip the Bold united Languedoc to the crown, it was governed by counts, many of whom are renowned for the prominent part they acted in the history of the period during which they held their sway over the province which gave them their title.

Like other great cities and states of former times, the days of its glory have long passed away, and it has dwindled into comparative insignificance, a third rate city of the empire. But although shorn of its former splendour, still its ancient buildings, its antique palaces, and its banquet halls, "though deserted," are the faithful memorials of its greatness, and of the wealth and

power which it contained. In Toulouse, the antiquarian will find a valuable store of Roman remains in architecture and sculpture, which the industry and honourable pride of the inhabitants have rescued from the ravages of time, and deposited in a place of safety. The poet may there dream over the lays of the Troubadours, and pay his homage at the shrine of one of the earliest promoters of his art, Clemence Isaure, the patroness of the Floral games, yearly festivals to which all the minstrels of the south flocked, to compete for the Golden Violet, the reward of the successful poet. In the Salle de la Capitale is now preserved the statue in white marble of Clemence, which stood formerly over her tomb, in the church de la Daurade; and below it is a copy of the inscription in Provençal, which adorned her sepulchre. Besides being the patroness of the art of poetry, she was herself one of the most celebrated minstrels of the age, and many of her poetic effusions are preserved in a collection reprinted at Toulouse.

Recent events have also bestowed upon Toulouse an additional interest, and few will visit that city without strolling over the battle field of

the 12th of April, 1814. Toulouse has been, and still is, the capital of the arts in the south of France; and the energy and talents of some of its natives, has prevented it from falling into that decay which most towns, indebted greatly for their prosperity to their being the seat of royalty, have, by its abandonment, been subject to. Of all the projects which have been attempted to retain Toulouse among the flourishing cities of France, and secure to her commercial prosperity, none have been more successful than the construction of the great Canal du Midi, forming a communication between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. It was commenced in 1681, from the plans and under the direction of the Baron de Bonrepos. It passes by Villefranche, Castlenaudry, Carcassone, Beziers, and Villeneuve, and finally opens into the Lake of Thau, near the Mediterranean, a little above Ayde. The length of the Canal from the Mediterranean to the Garonne, is sixty-two leagues; its breadth at the surface, is sixty-two, and the general depth of the water about six feet. In many places, this canal is hollowed out of the rock; the highest point between the two seas is at Naurouse, near Castelnaudry, where a basin

has been formed twelve hundred feet long, and nine hundred broad. In order to keep it constantly filled, the immense reservoir of St. Ferreol has been constructed. Its figure is triangular, enclosed by two mountains, and by an immense dike, which forms its base, and through which an aqueduct passes, to supply the basin of Naurouse. Few pieces of masonry surpass the dike of St. Ferreol in extent and solidity; its length is two thousand five hundred and twenty feet, and its height one hundred and fifty. By means of this work of art, the corn of Upper Languedoc is conveyed to the southern departments, and the merchandise of foreign countries brought to Toulouse. A packet-boat goes the whole length of the canal, and affords travellers the means of a pleasant and economical excursion.

Anxious to commence my wanderings among the mountains, I did not remain long in Toulouse. I visited the museum of Roman antiquities, which are beautifully arranged. It contains some very fine specimens scarcely to be met with elsewhere. An hour was well spent in the foundry for cannon; but the object which interested me most was the Chateau d' Eau, an ingenious construction

to supply the city with water. Situated as Toulouse is in a plain, the difficulty of acquiring a sufficient quantity of water to supply the wants of the inhabitants was very great. To obviate the necessity and expense of carting it daily from the river, an ingenious watchmaker of the town constructed the Chateau d' Eau. It is a round tower, to the right of the bridge on entering the town from the east. Two large wheels, within this building, are driven by the river, and work an immense pump, which forces a great body of water to the upper story of the tower. There the water passes into the filtering boxes which surround the room, and thence into the numerous pipes, which, passing along the bridge, convey the water in abundance to all parts of the city. The usefulness and luxury of this simple invention, in a southern town, may be imagined. From the summit of this tower there is a fine and extensive view over the surrounding country. You look upon the sunny plains of Languedoc and Gascony, can trace the windings of the Garonne, and admire the picturesque but distant chain of the Pyreneés.

The Hotel de Ville, the Cathedral, which has a singular appearance, the fountains, and several

other objects, are worthy of notice. The Theatre is situated in the Place; it has been lately built, and although not large, is a handsome and elegant building. The Place is encircled by cafés, and handsome shops, and at night, when the vacant space in the centre is filled with innumerable booths, for the disposal of every species of merchandise, and the whole square one blaze of light, the effect is at once novel and beautiful. From the balcony of the theatre, I looked down upon this curious scene. It seemed as if the whole inhabitants of Toulouse had assembled there, either to wander among the mazes of the stalls, or to idle away the evening beneath the coloured verandahs of the cafés, in smoking their cigar or pipe, sipping their lemonade, and remarking upon the passers by. This was the first time I had beheld the natives of a southern clime luxuriating under the influence of a genial temperature, and I enjoyed the spectacle exceedingly.

At the Hotel de l' Europe, I met with a facetious old gentleman, who had served under Napoleon in his Italian campaign, and who volunteered to conduct me over the battle-field of Toulouse. From wounds received in Italy, he had been obliged to retire from the army, when

he settled in his native town, and was present "en amateur" in the fight of the 12th of April, 1814.

I could not have had a better guide, or a more impartial narration of the events of that day. From his having no duties to perform, he was at liberty to go where he pleased, and become an eye-witness of the movements in all parts of the field. Soult, after the battle of Orthes, retreated to Toulouse as expeditiously as possible, taking the line of road by St. Gaudens. Wellington, on the other hand, followed his enemy slowly, and took the longer route by Auch. The consequence was, that Soult had not only time to take up one of the strongest positions in the country, but to entrench and fortify it. He encircled the rising ground, immediately to the east of the town, with strong redoubts and trenches; he had his left protected by the town and the canal; in his front the ground sloped down to the plain, and at the bottom of the declivity, and along the front of his position, run a narrow but deep and muddy river; while the ground rising to his right enabled him to plant redoubts still higher, thus protecting as well as commanding his position, should it be carried by assault.

Although more than twenty years had elapsed since our gallant soldiers drove the enemy from this strong position, and the plough had passed year after year over the field of battle, the embankments and trenches remain undestroyed, and like the Roman hill forts of my own land, may exist for centuries to come. My conductor pointed out to me in the distance, in front of Soult's position, the chateau from which the Duke of Wellington surveyed the field; he described to me the manner in which the British advanced to the attack, distinguishing the points against which the Spaniards and Portuguese, and the Sans Culottes, the "regiments d' Ecosse," were opposed.

The first impression which was made upon this strong position, was the eastern redoubt being carried by the Sans Culottes. It seems, that, according to the account given me, Soult had placed in defence of this redoubt, an officer with whom he had had some difference, to whom he imputed some blame, and whose impatience to remove the stigma cast upon him, cost him his life, and the loss of the post he was ordered to defend. Wellington had ordered a Scottish

brigade to attack this point, who, with some difficulty, crossed the river in their front, and advanced against it. The French officer, commanding the redoubt, burning with eagerness to retrieve his character, and favoured by the situation of the ground, rashly, and against his orders, quitted his position, and led his men against the Scottish brigade. The French had all the advantage of the higher ground, and the struggle was fierce, but decisive. The French were driven back, and endeavoured to regain their redoubt, which they did; but it was in company with the Scottish regiments, who entered pell-mell along with them, and finally drove them from it.

My conductor's admiration of my countrymen was great, and it would be difficult to say, whether he was most eloquent in extolling their intrepidity, or in execrating the folly of the commandant, which led to the disaster. The Spaniards and Portuguese advanced against the left of the position. They behaved gallantly, and fought bravely; and would, but for an unforeseen circumstance, have been more successful than they were. Between the canal and the strong redoubt upon the left, a country road which led into the plain,

had been cut through the bank immediately in front of the redoubt, forming an enormous and almost impassable trench. To the columns advancing against the redoubt, this obstacle was imperceptible; and it was not until the foremost of their ranks, advancing up the slope, and within a few yards, as they thought, of the low breast-works of the redoubt, found this yawning chasm in front of them. In attempting to cross it they were mown down by hundreds, their bodies forming the means of passage to those who followed. When the dead were collected, nearly 4000 Spanish and Portuguese were found within this narrow way, so confined, that they might have been buried en masse in the trench whose existence had destroyed them.*

The most important part of the position gained, the defeat of the French was the certain consequence, and Soult was again driven from his strong-hold.

I was delighted by the manner in which my companion spoke of the conduct of the British

* The Spaniards have an erroneous belief that Wellington sacrificed their countrymen at Toulouse.

troops, while quartered in Toulouse, and the adjoining district; it was highly complimentary, and tallied with what I had heard in other provinces, and of which I shall hereafter have occasion to speak. The short sketch which he gave me of the battle of Toulouse, may or may not be correct, but such as it is, I have given it, as nearly as possible, in his own words. I remember an observation which he made when talking of the merits of the Duke of Wellington as a commander. "He is a great general," said he, "mais il est toujours trop long à faire son affaire;" at the same time instancing the circumstance of the Duke's permitting such a length of time to elapse between the battle of Orthes and his appearance before Toulouse, as to enable Soult to remedy his losses, and establish himself in comparative security there. "If," said he, "Wellington had followed up his success at Orthes, he might have destroyed the retreating French army before it reached Toulouse; or, at all events, prevented their entrenching themselves as they did, and throwing another cast in the game they were playing." I merely replied, that we had an old proverb in our country, that

it was better to do a thing slowly and surely, than quickly and imperfectly, and perhaps the Duke of Wellington had not hitherto found the maxim a bad one.

From the battle-field we went to the prefecture, where I wished to have my passport examined. I thought it sufficient to have it countersigned for Perpignan, instead of stating where I intended going, and obtaining a more general passport. The inconvenience and loss of time which this oversight occasioned me, will appear very shortly.

In the hall of the prefecture, I found several Spanish Capuchin monks, than whom, I never beheld finer specimens of the human race; indeed I never met with one of their brethren, who was not remarkable for his appearance. The monkish establishments in Spain were already breaking up, and many of their numbers found it safer to cross the frontier, than remain in their own country. Among the number were these Capuchins; and, if manly beauty and dignity of bearing could interest in their favour, they were certainly entitled to it.

Few English make Toulouse their place of residence. The climate is not favourable—wet

and cold during winter, and scorchingly hot in summer. There is, besides, great difficulty in obtaining anything like a comfortable house; and being so seldom sought after, the inhabitants do not make any preparations for the reception of strangers; and a house "to let furnished," is consequently considered a novelty.

I left Toulouse for Perpignan in the coupé of the diligence. In the neighbourhood of Toulouse the country is rich, but flat and uninteresting, affording little either to amuse or attract the notice of the traveller.

It was evening when I left Toulouse; and, as I had the whole of the coupé to myself, I indulged in the thoughts of spending a comfortable night. I was soon, however, joined by a gendarme, who said he was only going as far as the next village. He did *go*, but it was only because he was relieved by another who took his place; and from him, who was rather too open and talkative a person for his profession, I learnt that there was a quantity of government money in the diligence, upon which occasions it is accompanied by a gendarme. These gentlemen police are not only respectable from their character—being

generally picked men from the line—but, their showy uniform and fine horses, give them the appearance of the finest troops in France. They are scarcely ever employed on service unconnected with the police; although I believe Napoleon did, on some occasions, make them do duty as soldiers of the army. Their pay is about £80 a year, and out of this they have to find their uniforms and horses. They are not shifted from place to place as the army, but established in the districts of which they are natives, or with which they are, at least, well acquainted; by this means, rendering it very difficult indeed for any one to escape from their surveillance.

When we arrived at Carcassone, the few hours of partial darkness had been succeeded by the morning light. We remained here a short time, during which I walked through the town. Carcassone has the character of being one of the most curious and best preserved Gothic cities of France. Cæsar notices it in his commentaries, as being a city of the Roman province. It underwent many vicissitudes of fortune, successively governed by the Romans, the Visigoths, the Saracens, and united to France by Pepin le Bref.

Simon de Montfort also waved his bloody sword over Carcassone; and established the inquisition there. In the church of St. Naraise is his tomb, covered by a slab of red marble, without sculpture or inscription. There is a popular tradition, that the treasures of the Visigoth kings are hid in this city; which treasures were the rich spoils taken from the temple of Jerusalem and the palace of Solomon, and transported to Rome, and which were pillaged by Alaric the first, when he took the imperial city. The inhabitants have often searched the wells of Carcassone upon the strength of this tradition.

Here my gendarme companion left me, and a lady, the wife of an officer quartered at Perpignan, took his place. From Carcassone to Limoux, the road skirts the river Aûde, through a country of the same description as that which I had hitherto passed. At Limoux,—famous for its sparkling wine, the champagne of the south,—we stopped to breakfast. It is a small, but prettily situated town; the outer ridges of the Pyreneés rise immediately behind it, covered with wood, and the vines which produce its delicious wine. We found it almost impossible

to eat our breakfast, from the enormous quantity of the common fly which annoyed us. They were in myriads, swarming on the plates and dishes like bees when they are hiving; one of the waiters of the inn literally did nothing else than wage an ineffectual war against them. It seemed as if the whole flies of the department had assembled to do honour to the provisions of our host, for I did not observe any quantities of them elsewhere.

Near the town, on a little hill beside the Aude, is the chapel of Notre Dame de Limoux, famed for the miracles which have been wrought in it. Pilgrims and devotees flock to it from all quarters. In the centre of the edifice is a well; the water of which, they say, has the property of curing all kinds of diseases. The following inscription is written over it, "Omnis qui bibit hanc aquam, si fidem addit salvus erit;" which the wags of the country have underlined with, "Croyez cela, et buvez de l'eau."

The road continues to skirt the river, winding among the low hills, the outposts of the range of the Corbieres. The vines are not trained here as in other parts of the south; but are stunted and

inelegant, seldom exceeding eighteen inches in height.

Half way between Limoux and Quilan, we passed the village of Alet, noted for its mineral waters, and the beauty of its situation. Embosomed in vineyards and orchards, in a nook of its narrow valley, and sequestered from the surrounding districts, it is a perfect paradise in appearance. It is one of those rich and fertile spots which the religious fathers of olden times had selected for their resting-place. The fathers have now passed away, but the extensive and magnificent remains of their church, and other buildings, are evidence that it was at one period a place of no small importance. Some of the columns which are still standing, and a few of the doorways and Gothic windows in good preservation, are remarkably beautiful.

Quilan is a considerable village, encircled by barren and stony hills. After quitting it, the road begins rapidly to ascend the ridge of the Corbieres, which divide the department of the Aude from Roussillon. The road is well executed, traversing the sides of the hills, and crossing and re-crossing the river many times,

evidently having been a work of care and labour. The country, although it cannot be said to be mountainous, is poor and miserable in the extreme, the soil producing almost nothing. Although August had commenced, the crops were not yet taken in, and so wretched were they, that the children were pulling the corn with their hands. The hills of grey-stone had scarcely any verdure upon them, the box and juniper, the least delicate of plants, deserting them. Upon reaching the summit of the ridge, the road winds through a labyrinth of stony mounds, not a leaf or plant of any kind to be seen; it seems as if some tremendous waterspout had created this scene of desolation, and washed the whole soil into the plains.

My companion, the lady who was going to join her husband at Perpignan,—born in the plains of the north, had never seen hills or mountains in her life before; and, as some of her friends in Perpignan had been kind enough to apprize her of the dangerous nature of the descent into Roussillon, she had, ever since we left Quilan, been incessantly talking about it;

and, as she approached it, she became exceedingly alarmed and terrified.

The summit of the ridge is quitted by a narrow passage, the entrance to which has, in other times, been guarded by a fort built upon the rocks beside it; and, from this spot, the traveller can look down upon the plains of Roussillon, and distinguish the road corkscrewing down the mountain into the valley many thousand feet below. Few roads, even in the higher Pyreneés, are more rapid in their descent than this, and none of them narrower, or worse defended, without any parapet, and hanging like a shelf on the mountain side. Having passed the old fort, and put the drag chains upon the wheels, the conductor set off full gallop down the descent. The lady screamed; but, with the noise of the diligence, and the rain which fell in torrents, no one could hear her but myself. She shut her eyes, seized hold of me, and, fortunately for herself, fainted. The rocks were almost over our heads; and, when we were going down at this rate, an immense block, of perhaps twenty or thirty tons weight, detached from its resting-

place by the rains of the preceding night, came over the mountain side; and, dashing upon the narrow road a few hundred yards in advance of us, carried one half of it into the valley. Here was a pretty situation to be placed in—a fainting lady in my arms, with the knowledge that a few seconds would decide whether we were to pass the breach which had been made, or accompany the rock in its descent. To pull up was impossible; the rate at which we were going, and the impetus given to the carriage, totally precluded it, even had there been harness for the horses to hold back with, which there was not. As we approached, a cry of horror came from those in the *blanquete*,* who could see the danger, and I thanked God that the lady was insensible to it. What, if any of the leaders swerved from the path; what, if the conductor had not a steady head, and still steadier hand—were thoughts of the moment. I threw the lady upon the seat; and, climbing through the window of the coupé to the side of the driver, urged him to keep the heads of the leaders well to the rock; so that

* The upper part of a diligence.

they (if it was yet possible to pass) might not see the danger, and start from it. Most fortunately, he was a steady fellow; he did as he was desired; and we gallopped over the remaining shelf, barely broad enough for the wheels to run upon: and, turning round, I could see an additional portion of the road roll down the precipice, from the shock which the diligence had given it. The danger was seen and passed in the tenth part of the time which I have taken to narrate it; and we arrived in safety at the bottom.

I have seldom found myself in a situation of greater danger; no exertion of my own could here avail in extricating me, which, when I could employ, I have always found effectual in stunning the unpleasant feelings upon such occasions. At the bottom of the descent is the village of Caudies, where the lady was soon revived, and the driver had the assembled villagers round him, listening to his story, which lost nothing by being told by a Frenchman; but, in this case, there could be no *embroidery*—it was not possible to make the danger greater, short of our having actually rolled into the abyss. I suggested the propriety of sending over the

ridge, to give warning on the other side of the accident, and of the impossibility of crossing; and a party set off for the purpose.

The country from Caudies to Perpignan is barren and desolate; the valley bounded by low hills, grey from their base to their summits. There are here and there patches of vines; but their diminutive height, and sickly appearance, do not render its aspect more agreeable. Here, for the first time, I beheld the olive-tree. They resemble a species of willow so strongly, that at first I took them for it; but to find willows in such a parched and burnt-up land was too extraordinary a phenomenon to permit the impression to last. They were stunted and bent double by the prevailing wind; so that vines, olives, rocks, and soil, combined in forming a most unhealthy-looking scene. A barren heath is not an agreeable-looking sight; but sterility, accompanied by the yellow and sickly tinge with which a burning sun decorates it, is far more unpleasing. I am confident, that, had Dr. Johnson, previous to having visited the Moor of Rannoch, passed this spot, his doleful account of the moor would have been softened by his recollections of this valley.

Struggling over infamously bad roads, and passing through several fortified looking villages, the red sandstone of whose buildings was crumbling to pieces; it was not until late that we crossed the bridges over the Tet, and were admitted within the many barriers which protect the town of Perpignan. The diligence was driven into what had been an ancient church, and the door closed the moment that we entered, to prevent any of us leaving it before delivering up our passports to the gendarmes, who are always, in every town of France, waiting the arrival of the diligences.

CHAPTER II.

Perpignan—Appearance of the Town—A Fête Day—Peculiar Dances—Citadel—The Canigoû—Passport—Elne—Collioure—Port Vendre—The Mediterranean—Wine of Roussillon—Folly of my Countrymen abroad—Sail round the Bay—Fête at Collioure—Costumes—Language—Threatened Detention—Kind-hearted Landlord.

THE early history of Roussillon,—insulated from France by the mountains of the Corbieres, and from Spain by the Pyreneés,—is very obscure, little being known regarding it until Hannibal crossed the Pyreneés. A century after that period, the Romans, having become masters of the countries on the coast of the Mediterranean, incorporated Roussillon with their other possessions. About the fifth century, the Romans

were succeeded by the Visigoths, who held this province for three centuries, and introduced their laws and customs; until the Saracens, having vanquished Roderic, broke into it in 719, and committed all kinds of excesses. A short period afterwards, Pepin, in his turn, drove out the Saracens, and united Roussillon to France. Then succeeded the dominion of the counts. These counts were originally only the viceroys of the kings of France; but they subsequently assumed the sovereignty, and became hereditary. Roussillon had sometimes its particular counts, and sometimes the kings of Arragon governed it under that title; but, until Louis IX., the kings of France were always considered as its suzerains. By the treaty of Corbeil, in 1258, Louis IX. renounced this fief in favour of James I., king of Arragon; who, upon this concession, withdrew his pretensions to a part of Languedoc. After the death of James, and the division of his states among his children, Roussillon was governed by the kings of Majorca. During the bloody war in the fourteenth century, between the kings of Majorca and Arragon, the latter acquired possession of it, and retained it for

half a century, being generally the appanage of the eldest son.

John II., attacked by the Navarese and Catalans, begged assistance from Louis XI. of France, who sent him seven hundred lances, and three hundred thousand ecus of gold; which the King of Arragon was to repay when the war was terminated. John was not, however, able to fulfil his obligation, and gave Roussillon as security for the debt. The Roussillonnese revolted, and twice Louis XI. laid siege to Perpignan, and, on the second occasion, he took it, after a nine months' resistance. Charles VIII., engrossed with the idea of his expedition to Naples, restored this province to the king of Arragon; and Ferdinand II., becoming king of Spain by his marriage with Isabella, Roussillon fell under the Spanish dominion. It ought, however, by its position, to belong to France; and, accordingly, Louis XIII. endeavoured to recover it; and, eventually sending an army under the command of the Great Condé, that general gained several battles, and, taking many of the strong places, succeeded in reducing Perpignan. These conquests facilitated an accommodation; and the

treaty of the Pyreneés secured to France the disputed province. Since 1659, Roussillon has formed an integral part of that kingdom.

Perpignan, like most other towns built more with a view to security than to the accommodation of its inhabitants, is as dirty and confined as it can possibly be, offering no inducement to prolong the traveller's stay beyond the time necessary to have his passport examined. After having satisfied my appetite, which had not suffered from the events of the day, I rambled over the town, and could have fancied myself on the Spanish side of the mountains. The excessively narrow streets, with their balconies, from which the inhabitants were conversing with their opposite neighbours; and, above all, the little bands of musicians, who were serenading under the windows, betrayed their ancient connexion with Spain, and their adherence to some of its customs.

I had been desired, by the gendarme who took my passport when I arrived, to call the next morning at the Bureau de Police, and receive it. I went there, but could hear nothing regarding it, and was bid to go to the Passport Office in the Prefecture, which I did, but found it shut, and

was desired to call again at one, when it would be open.

While at breakfast, in the public room of the hotel, several musicians entered the room, accompanied by one or two men carrying enormous cakes, one of which was set on the table; and a neighbour, understanding the custom, sent round a plate for a collection; which was given them. They then played several airs, and, taking up their cake, departed. It was a fête day, I forget in honour of what saint, and the inhabitants were all decked out in their holiday suits, singing and dancing in all the Places, where, in circles formed by branches and evergreens, difficult to procure at Perpignan, they perform their various and extraordinary dances.

The Roussillonnese, from their long intimacy with Spain, have had a Spanish tinge given to their manners. This, apparent in the towns, is much more so in the country; where the predilection for the amusements of the Peninsula is so great, that the labourer will quit his work, the shopkeeper his boutique, the husbandman leave his land untilled; and travel leagues to witness a bull-fight, or other spectacle. They are passion-

ately fond of dancing. Some of the figures of their dances are very peculiar and original. The men generally open the dance by a "contrepas," the measure of which declares its Greek origin. The women then follow, who, mingling with the men, alternately cross and turn each other round; the measure then changes, its sudden stops indicating to the men, that they must raise their partners with a bound, and place them upon their hand, or upon a seat. It requires both activity and strength to accomplish this; and the strongest often fail from want of address. One of the figures, called "Lo Salt," is performed by four men, and four women, dancing in a circle. At a particular moment, the four cavaliers, passing their hands under the arms of the ladies, simultaneously exalt them in the air, thus forming a pyramid, of which the crest is the caps of the women.

These dances are executed to music which at first sounds somewhat strange. The flageolet, the tambourine, two oboés, the borassa, and the bagpipe, which I was surprised to find here, form an orchestra more agreeable than, from the motley character of the instruments, might have been

expected. The citadel is large; and the French government, considering it of great consequence as a military position, have expended enormous sums upon its fortifications. It commands a fine view over Roussillon, and of the mountains which, excepting upon the side of the Mediterranean, encircle it. The Pyreneés, dividing it from Spain, rise abruptly, but to no great height from the ocean; but gradually increasing in majesty, stretch to the westward as far as the eye can reach. The highest peak in the distance is the Canigoû, long thought the highest of the Pyrenean range, which honour it unjustly acquired from the great apparent altitude which its insulated situation gave it; when its measurement was taken, it was found to be three hundred and thirty toises beneath the Maladetta, or Mont Perdu, and inferior to many other summits of the Pyreneés. I do not, however, wonder at its having held an honour among the ancients, to which it was not entitled, rising, as it does, from the plain, and springing at once to the height of one thousand four hundred and thirty toises, it is a magnificent and imposing object. At some distance at sea, and when the lower hills which

surround it are invisible, its bold and majestic appearance must be still more striking.

The citadel, from its situation, is a place of considerable strength; the country around it being low and flat, it cannot be commanded.

The cathedral or church of St. John is a very antique structure, displaying the Spanish taste in its gorgeous gildings and massy ornaments. In it is the tomb of the first archbishop of Perpignan. The Gothic inscription upon two pillars, states, that in the year 1324, the epoch of its foundation, the first stone was laid by Sanchez, king of Arragon, and the second by Edward, prince of England; this must have been the Black Prince, when on a visit to his ally, the king of Arragon. Perpignan, like Calais, Valentia, and other towns, can boast of its brave bourgeois. Jean Blanca, a citizen of Perpignan, was governor of that town, when Louis the eleventh besieged it in 1475; his only son having been taken prisoner in a sortie, the besiegers sent a message to Blanca, to the effect, that, if he persisted in his defence, and would not open the gates, his son should be put to death. The courageous governor replied, "That the ties of

blood and paternal affection would never for one moment interfere with his duty to God, his king, and his country." This heroic answer decided the fate of his son, who was then put to death in the sight of his father.

According to appointment, I presented myself at the Bureau des Passports, and was told by the officer to call again at four o'clock. This was very provoking, as I wished to leave this dirty hot town as soon as possible. I inquired of him why there was not a fixed hour for the delivery of passports? Upon which he asked me if I thought they (the clerks of the Bureau) had nothing to do but to attend to the wants of travellers? I retorted, and pointing to the sign over the door, told him "That to attend to the wants of travellers was the very purpose for which he was placed there; that he was the servant of the public, was paid by the public, and therefore ought, at least, to be civil to them." Upon this the official became most obsequious, apologized for my being detained, which, had it not been a fête-day, should not have taken place. Had the fellow given this reason at first, I should not have been annoyed, which I was, less on my own

account, than upon that of a young German, who was in the same predicament, with whom I had made acquaintance the preceding evening; and who, having arrived at Perpignan at the same time as myself, intended to have gone to Barcelona, upon urgent business, the following day. Relying upon having my passport countersigned at some of the frontier towns, I asked for, and obtained it, rather than wait until the Prefet chose to return to town. This detention, disagreeable at the time, was afterwards, however, a matter of congratulation to my companion, who, had he gone to Barcelona, would have arrived there just in time to witness the massacres which took place in August, 1835.

Hiring a cabriolet to take me to Port Vendre, I left Perpignan.

Near the mouth of the Tet, is the tower called the Tor di Castel Rossello, marking the site of the Ruscino of the Romans, from which the province derives its name. All the villages and farmhouses are built upon knolls, and surrounded by walls, a necessary protection in a border country, subject to the frequent inroads of enemies. The soil, excepting in the immediate

vicinity of the rivers (of which, fortunately for the inhabitants, there are three which flow from the mountains), is arid and barren.

About three leagues from Perpignan, is the village of Elne, a place of very great antiquity; nothing now remains of its former grandeur but its massy and buttressed church. It was first called Illiberis, and is supposed to have been of Phenician origin, and at the period when Hannibal crossed the mountains, was opulent and flourishing. It was afterwards destroyed; Constantine rebuilt it, and bestowed upon it the name of his mother, Helen, which it has since then retained. Within the church is the tomb of the Emperor Constant, murdered by the orders of Magnentius. Its archbishopric, the most ancient in Roussillon, was transferred to Perpignan, in 1604. Upon the outside of the building, are many gothic inscriptions of different dates—most probably epitaphs. Crossing the river Tech, and leaving the little town of Argelès upon the right, the road draws nearer to the sea, the very sight of which made me feel the mid-day sun less oppressive. Every where the country people were assembled dancing and singing. At Collioure,

or Colliouvre, as the peasants call it, a small town close to Port Vendre, they were most energetic in celebrating the day. The open *place* in front of the harbour, was crowded with dancers, who were, at the time I passed, performing the dance called "Lo Salt," and at a distance, seeing the women every now and then elevated above the crowd, had a curious effect.

Two or three bays are here formed by the Alberes, as the low range of the Pyreneés which drop into the Mediterranean are called, and in one of them is Collioure, in another, Port Vendre. The heights around Collioure are covered with fortifications, and at the mouth of its harbour is a small island, upon which is built a picturesque little chapel.

Half an hour's drive along the cliffs, from Collioure, brought me to Port Vendre,* which derives its name from a temple which the Romans had erected here to the Venus of the Pyreneés, and in which the mariners were wont to deposit offerings. It had, like many of the other towns of its province, fallen into decay, and its harbour

* The greater portion of the French troops destined for Algiers are embarked at Port Vendre.

became choked up; but its importance being acknowledged, the French government set about clearing it out; and Marshal de Mailly, governor of the province, by his great exertions, succeeded in effecting an entrance for frigates in 1780. In commemoration of this event, a marble column, one hundred feet high, has been erected in the little *Place* at the upper end of the harbour.

Having made myself acquainted with the landlord of the best inn of the village, ordered supper, and secured a bed, I went down to the beach to have a swim in the waters of the Mediterranean. The very name of this sea conveys the idea of all that is lovely and attractive; so much romance and poetry have been lavished in extolling its beauties—its sunny skies, and its verdant banks, covered with orange trees and myrtles. But at Port Vendre, and, indeed, all along the coast of Languedoc, the imaginative traveller will find himself sadly disappointed. Excepting where the buttresses of the Pyrenees dip into it, and relieve its monotony, the French coast of the Mediterranean presents a succession of lagoons, marshes, and low sandy hills, until it nears the Italian frontier, when its character becomes changed, and it is the Mediterranean he had sup-

posed it to be. Notwithstanding the disappointment of the imagination, I could not help feeling a sensation of pleasure and satisfaction in dipping into it.

The harbour is formed by a small bay, the entrance to which is, by the surrounding hills, narrowed to a small strait, thus making one of the most completely sheltered stations to be found anywhere. Here, as at Collioure, are innumerable forts, partly to guard the shipping, partly the frontier. One larger than the others, called Fort St. Elme, is perched upon a peak of the highest summit in the vicinity, and commands all the others. The most extreme point of Roussillon, stretching into the Mediterranean, is the Cap de Bearn, which would be a more appropriate name upon the western limits of the Pyreneés; it is to the south of Port Vendre, and beyond, a couple of miles distant from it, is Baniols, the last French village upon the frontier, from which there is a pass into Catalonia. I walked on board one of the largest vessels in the harbour, the Captain of which, I found, had been in the service of an acquaintance at Bordeaux. I accordingly invited him to sup with me; I also made the landlord—a quaint old fellow—join us. They pressed me

not to leave Port Vendre next day, but to sail round with them to Collioure, and join in the ceremonies of the fête, which I found was to be of three days' duration. I agreed to the proposal. The wine of Roussillon is sweet, but pleasant; and the landlord, being a considerable proprietor, had, of course, a store of it: he produced the oldest and the best he had, and we did ample justice to his cellar. I ought to mention, that when I paid my bill, the old gentleman would not permit me to pay for more than one half of the wine drunk, the other half, he insisted, was his own share. I attributed this to the behaviour of an English lady and gentleman, who, some how or other, had found their way to this place, had resided in his house, and of whom he spoke highly. This, although a trifling matter in itself, shows that a traveller, leaving a good name behind him in any place, may serve those of his countrymen who follow him. Would that my countrymen would study this a little more than they do! They squander their money liberally enough, but that is all. They seldom conciliate the natives by affability, nor pay sufficient regard to their habits and feelings, to render themselves esteemed

and regretted when they quit the place in which they have been sojourning. During the Peninsular war, the British were respected by the Spanish on account of their honesty; but they were not loved. Quite the contrary. Without his money to pay for what he wanted, the English soldier could not procure an article—and why? Simply because they did not, in some measure, accommodate themselves to the manners and customs of the people among whom they were; the French did so, and they were fed and entertained, and generally never paid a sous.

Having breakfasted the following morning with the captain, on board his vessel, we got into his boat, and pulled out of the harbour for Collioure. One of the solemnities of the day was a pilgrimage, made by all the inhabitants of the district, to the little chapel which I have mentioned. The scene when we turned the headland, and looked into the bay of Collioure, was animated and beautiful. Many boatfulls of the gaily-dressed devotees were passing and repassing between the shore and the chapel; and the rock upon which it is built was clustered with them, waiting their turn of admission. We went immediately to the

chapel. Every one had an offering of some kind or other to bestow. Some had tapers, and others had bouquets of flowers; we alone had come empty-handed. We had, however, a few silver pieces for the Tronc des pauvres. Having visited the chapel, we pulled ashore, and joined the dancers on the beach.

The costume of the women resembles that of the Spanish females along the frontier. Their head-dress is composed of a long white handkerchief, folded double upon the head, one corner of it hanging down behind, the other two tied under the chin, and a bow of black ribbons placed in the centre of the forehead; a tightly laced boddice, and short petticoat, ample in its folds, displays their well-formed limbs and party-coloured stockings. In bad weather, they have also the capulet—an article between a hood and a short cloak—which, when they are not using it, is folded in a square and laid upon the head. This is generally made of white woollen stuff, bound with black velvet. The men wear a bonnet of red cloth trimmed with velvet, and so long, that its end dangles between their shoulders. This bonnet is the most distinguishing feature of the Cata-

lan's dress. A short vest, with a sash round his waist, loose flowing pantaloons, and shoes, or more generally spartillas (sandals made of hemp), complete it.

Their language, which now-a-days is called the *patois* of the country, is remarkable for its antiquity. It is one of those ancient idioms known under the various denominations of vulgar Roman, broken Latin, provincial or Provençal, the Limousin, or the Catalan. Traces of their language are to be found in the poetry of the Salian rhymes, many words of which, although long since rejected in the Latin, have been preserved in the Catalan. It may, therefore, be supposed to be a child of Greece, prior to the period when Democritus grammaticised the Latin language.

Upon my return to Port Vendre, I told my landlord that I had left Perpignan without having my passport countersigned for the towns upon the frontier, but that I supposed that I could have it done at the Mairie here. He said that he would have it done. The Maire, however, was not at home, and the schoolmaster (his deputy) was a surly fellow, and would not comply; and insinuated that he should feel obliged to send me

back next morning to Perpignan escorted by a gendarme. This was rather awkward, as I had no wish to revisit that town so soon again. I went to him and expostulated, but it was of no avail; and he bowed me out with: "You must go back to Perpignan to-morrow morning, Sir."

"He shall find himself mistaken," said my host, when we were out of the official's hearing. "You shall go on your journey unmolested, and I will provide the means. The Maire will not arrive until late, and his deputy will have to consult him before arresting you. Now, as he is no very early riser, you shall take my pony, and, accompanied by Francisco, be off and away long before any orders have been given concerning you; and, should they come here to look for you, I shall be ready with some excuse or other, to account for your absence."

I agreed — quite willing to cheat the schoolmaster. So, after determining upon the route we were to take, I went to bed, to prepare for a start by day-light, and a long journey on the morrow.

CHAPTER III.

Escape—Appearance of the Country—Spanish guide, Francisco—Gallant conduct of an English Frigate—Bolou—Anecdote of Guerilla warfare—Cork-tree forests—Fortress of Bellegarde—Civility of its Governor — View into Spain — Foresight of Francisco.

I WAS awoke before day-light the next morning by my host, and told that Francisco and the pony were waiting in the court-yard, and that I should lose no time in being off. In a very few minutes I was ready to start, and bade adieu to my kind-hearted landlord; and, mounted upon his pony, with Francisco trotting along side, left the village— taking care to make as little noise as possible as we passed the schoolmaster's house. All, however, was quiet within; the shutters

were closed, and its master, perhaps, dreaming over the little bit of business which he had to transact in the morning.

I intended to have gone on to Bolou, and remained there for the night; but, as we had commenced our journey so very early, I had some hopes of being able to visit Bellegarde in the evening. The road to Bolou strikes off from that to Perpignan near Argèlles, and is a sandy track, passable only by horses and foot passengers. On either side were fields of untrained vines, stretching as far as the eye could distinguish; the fruit of which the thirsty traveller was welcome to partake of, without interruption of any kind; no surly master or barking dog to disturb the passing peasant as he sat himself down beside the choicest branches, and, taking out his loaf, commenced his simple breakfast.

Having little to interest me in this sandy desert, I entered into conversation with my companion. Francisco was a Spaniard from the province of Catalonia, had been a guerilla during the war of independence, and, at the peace, finding no employment at home, had come to Perpignan in search of it. From Perpignan he came to Port

Vendre, and entered into the service of his present master, with whom he had been several years. He was a tall and very powerful man, about forty-five years of age; and, although somewhat of a bulky appearance, had lost nothing of his youthful activity. His countenance did not characterize him as being very intelligent; and, upon first acquaintance, I set him down as being something of a fool, but I was never more mistaken in my life. It was not until I examined his physiognomy more particularly than I had done, that beneath an expression of apparent simplicity, I could detect a stronger, though less visible one, of thought and determination. I do not think I should have succeeded in drawing him into conversation, and obtaining some history of his past life, had it not been, that very soon getting tired of my pony, and preferring walking, I insisted upon Francisco mounting him. This little attention, and a few pulls at my wine-skin, made us as good friends as possible. Besides many anecdotes of his warfare in the mountains, he related to me the account of an event of which he was an eye-witness, at Port Vendre, in the year 1812.

An English frigate of unequal force had attacked a French frigate, not more than a couple of miles from the harbour of Port Vendre. The fight continued for some time, during which the whole population of the place had assembled on the adjoining heights, to witness the capture and bringing in of the English ship. "Elle est prise! elle est prise!" was shouted along the cliffs, as each successive shot was fired by the French frigate—when, to their astonishment and disappointment, the Frenchman, finding the work too hard for him, and fearful of being taken, put about, and stood into the harbour, followed by the English frigate, until the batteries on the heights warned her of her danger. She then stood out to sea, went down to some of our stations on the Spanish coast (Francisco could not tell me which), had her damages repaired, and, in the course of a very short time, returned to Port Vendre. The French frigate was then in perfect safety, under protection of the batteries; and, although challenged by the English vessel to come out and renew the fight, she could not be prevailed upon to do so, notwithstanding her superiority. Having told me this anecdote, he inquired if the

people at Port Vendre had not mentioned it to me. I said they had not.

"I thought not," said he, "they felt so confident of their countrymen gaining the victory, that they like not to think, far less to talk upon the subject; and, in all probability, had you lived a year in the village, you would not have heard a word concerning it."

After four or five hours' walking, we arrived at Bolou, an old town upon the Tech. The ground in its neighbourhood being irrigated, it wore rather a more pleasing aspect than is in general to be seen in the province. The great road from Perpignan into Spain passes close to it. Just before entering the town, we were accosted by a gendarme, who, fortunately for me, was an acquaintance of Francisco's. I at once presented my passport, which he looked at for an instant, and returned to me, saying it was all right. As I intended remaining some time in the village, and did not wish to be interrogated by others who might not read my passport so favourably, I thought it better not to lose sight of this gentleman, but carried him along with me to the inn to partake of my breakfast.

At Bolou, I found the same scenes of dancing and singing as elsewhere. Having breakfasted, we walked into the *Place*, to look at the dancers, and I had been standing some time in the crowd which surrounded them, when some one tapped me on the shoulder, and, upon turning round, I found that it was a little gentleman, who stated that he was the Maire of the town, and wished to see my "papier," as the peasants in general designate a passport. This was rather an awkward rencontre, but, upon the instant, my friend the gendarme, who had been talking to some one, came up, and told the Maire that he had examined my passport, and that it was perfectly correct; upon which the Maire bowed, bade me good morning, and walked away. I returned to the Auberge, and Francisco, having finished his breakfast, and the pony his corn, we set out for Bellegarde.

Bolou is situated at the entrance to the valley formed by the Alberes, and the sterile ridges which shoot out from the Canigoû: it is also opposite to the narrow valley through which winds the road into Spain. Half a mile from Bolou, this road begins to ascend the Alberes, and is broad and handsome, so that carriages of

all kinds can pass it. It alternately ascends and descends, winding round the successive ridges, in order to render the ascent as gradual as possible.

At one of the turns in the road, Francisco made me halt until he related to me a scene which took place there, and in which he performed an active part. During the period of the Guerilla warfare upon the frontier, he belonged to a party stationed in the neighbouring mountains. They had received orders to obtain possession, at all hazards, of certain dispatches which one of Napoleon's couriers was carrying into France. To entrap him upon the Spanish side of the mountains was impossible, from the strong guard which accompanied him. Accordingly, the daring plan of descending into the French territory, and capturing him after the greater part of his escort had left him at Bellegarde, was decided upon. Thirteen Spaniards stole from the mountains with this intention, and placed themselves in ambuscade by the side of the road. Francisco took me to the exact spot where his comrades and himself had lain concealed. It was in the heart of a knot of low shrubs, which skirted the oppo-

site side of the brook to that upon which run the road, and certainly within five and thirty or forty yards of it. They had established themselves here upon a Thursday morning, having every reason to believe that the courier would pass in the course of the day. Many an anxious look did they cast towards the fort, within reach of whose guns they might almost be said to be concealed; and soldiers and peasants passed along the road, unconscious of their enemies being so near them. The evening arrived, but the courier had not made his appearance. So confident had they been that he would come, that they had neither encumbered themselves with food, nor with cloaks to roll round them at night. In their little council of war, it was debated whether they should go back, or remain until the following day. It was decided, that they should remain exposed to hunger and the weather; but it is not easy to damp a Spaniard's courage when he has once determined upon exerting it. The forenoon of the following day passed, and the courier had not yet come, and they had begun to despair of gaining their object, when a troop of gendarmes was seen trotting

down the mountain side. Their flints examined, and their muskets newly primed, the Guerillas waited their approach. Their plan was to allow the escort to come perfectly close, and then, firing a volley among them, to rush in upon them afterwards. Down came the troop of gendarmes, seventeen in number, the courier riding in the centre, singing and laughing, and little imagining the reception which, in a few moments, they would receive from their hidden enemies, whom they had not the remotest idea would venture so far into the French territory. The Guerillas allowed the troop to approach so close to them that a child might have been sure of its aim at the distance, when they poured in their volley, and ten of the escort left their saddles. Bewildered, the remainder did not know what to do—whether to advance or retreat. They hesitated for an instant, and then galloped off for the fort. The volley from the Guerillas had not, however, secured the courier, but the momentary pause ere they took to flight, had sealed his fate. One of the Guerillas (the best shot of the party, one whose aim never failed) had reserved his fire for the courier, should he not be brought down by

his comrades. One solitary shot ran among the rocks before the echoes of the previous ones had died away, and the courier and his dispatches were in the hands of the desperate mountaineers, who regained their fastnesses unmolested.

During the recital of this daring act, Francisco stood upon the spot from which he fired; and, as his eye sparkled, and he clenched his staff and pointed to the spot of death, he was no longer the silent, simple-looking garçon of the Hotel de Commerce.*

In ancient times, there have been several fortified places in this little valley, the remains of which are to be seen upon every eminence remarkable for its natural strength; and, from a line of these old castles extending across the valley, I suspect that at one period the boundary between the two countries was close to them, and not where it at present is, on the very summit of the ridge.

Half way up the ascent, and to the left of the road, are the ruins of what, at one period, was

* The truth of this story was afterwards corroborated by an old douanier, whom I met upon my return from Bellegarde.

the strong castle of L'Ecluse, which, in former times, was the chief of the many towers and forts of the surrounding district. Bellegarde was then merely an outpost to defend the passage of L'Ecluse. Near it is the spot where Pompey erected the famous trophy on which his statue was placed. An inscription upon this monument stated, that this general had reduced to submission eight hundred and seventy-six towns between the Alps and the extremity of Spain. Twenty-three years afterwards, Cæsar erected by the side of this trophy a stone altar of great size; but both these monuments have been destroyed.

In 1764, two blocks of marble, intended to denote the boundaries of France and Spain, were placed by the order of the sovereigns of these kingdoms on the same spot; but which were thrown down in the wars of the revolution. The banks on either side of the valley are covered with the cork tree, forests of which extend into the mountains, their immense trunks, most of them stripped of their bark, have a strange and ghastly appearance.

About midday we reached Bellegarde. Its village is merely a range of houses which line

either side of the road as it tops the ridge, one half of them looking into Spain, the other into France. Here there is a guard stationed, with orders that no one shall be allowed to pass unless he is authorized by the Maire of the village. Not being aware of this punctilio, and wishing to take a look down the road into Spain, I passed the sentinel without noticing him. I had not advanced a few yards, when I was called to stop, and turning round, found the guard with his musket at the "ready;" this was quite sufficient warning not to proceed.

The fort of Bellegarde is perched upon a conical hill which rises in the centre of the two high ridges, which, running into France, forms the little valley which I had ascended; its situation is much higher than the village. From originally being a mere watch-tower, Louis the Fourteenth transformed it into a regular fort upon the modern system, and it has at different later periods been enlarged and improved. In 1694, it was taken by the Spaniards, who added some fortifications. Marshal Schomberg retook it in the July of the following year.

I wished very much to examine the interior of

the fort, but I had great doubts of my being permitted to do so. A circuitous path, which winds many times round the hill upon which it is built, leads to the fort from the village. I inquired of the sentinel at the drawbridge, if I should be allowed to enter it. He answered, that he thought not, but that I might send one of the soldiers who were standing near, to ask the governor. Accordingly I sent my compliments to the commandant, and requested permission to enter the fortress. The messenger returned, saying, the governor would be glad to see me. Francisco remained talking to the soldiers at the gate, and I followed my conductor.

I found the commandant, an ancien capitaine du genie, engaged in playing ecarté with his wife. He received me courteously, and put one or two leading questions to discover my object in coming to Bellegarde. He also inquired if I was going into Spain; if I was acquainted with engineering, and what route I intended following; all which queries having answered satisfactorily, and convinced him that amusement alone was the object I had in view, he not only gave me permission to examine the fort, and sent

his own servant along with me, but invited me to dinner, which invitation, however, I was obliged to decline, in consequence of the length of the journey I had still to perform that evening.

There is usually a garrison of six or seven hundred men in the fort, in time of peace; during war it is increased to four or five times that amount. The works are extensive, solid, and, so far as the situation will permit, may be well defended. But unfortunately it is commanded by some of the Spanish heights in the neighbourhood, particularly by one upon the left of the village. I pointed out this circumstance to my conductor, who had lived in the place for twenty years; and he told me that upon the last occasion that this fortress was taken by the Spaniards, all the mischief was done from the height to which I pointed. I then remarked an eminence at a considerable distance to the right of the fort, upon which a battery might have been placed, which could command the height alluded to; on this I was informed, that it has been resolved to erect a battery, the works of which have been already traced out, and are soon to be commenced. In the bastion which faces Spain, and from which

there is a fine view over all the country, as far as the strong fortifications of Figueras, is the tomb of General Dugommier, who was killed Nov. 18th, 1794, at the Black Mountain, by a shell, as he was preparing to attack the Spanish army.

Francisco, whom I had left at the entrance, very soon joined us, and I could observe the attention and care with which he scrutinized every part of the building. When we had gone over the whole of the works, I thanked the commandant for his civility, and we set out on our return to Bolou. I told Francisco, I had observed the great interest he seemed to take in viewing the interior of the fort, and asked him his reasons for so doing. He said, "I am not so old yet, sir, but that I may have to find my way into that building by some other way than the gate." He told me, also, that the soldiers murmured at my being allowed to enter the fort, supposing that my intention was to take a plan of it, which might be available to the English on some future occasion.

I regretted very much having to part with Francisco, who on his part was anxious to accompany me, and would have been of considerable service from his knowledge of Catalan,

of which I did not understand a syllable; but his duties obliged him to return to Port Vendre. As it was getting late when we arrived at Bolou, I remained there all night, contented with an indifferent supper, and a worse than indifferent bed, but hunger and fatigue are never very fastidious.

CHAPTER IV.

Spanish character by a Spaniard—Parting with Francisco—Catalan guide—Valley of the Tech—Shepherds and their Flocks—Ceret—Pyrenean Rivers in flood—Difficulty in making myself understood—Interpreter—His knowledge of Ossian's Poems—Fort les Bains—Arles—Iron Forges—Spanish Carlists—Ascent of the Canigoû—Mules not more sure-footed than Horses—Causes of the high price of Iron in France—Splendid View from the summit of the Canigoû—Descent—Valmania—Wandering Tailor—Village of Estoher—Country Doctor—Prades—Interview with its Prefet—His defeat.

At an early hour the following morning, I was awakened by Francisco, who came to bid me "good-bye." Before quitting me, he gave me voluntarily some information regarding the character of his countrymen. He said, "You will, in all probability, be soon among my countrymen; if not in

Spain, you may still meet with them in the mountains, and may chance to have to apply to them either for food or shelter. Do not believe what is said as to their being a savage and revengeful people; their enemies belie them. When injured, they do indeed seldom forget it, but they as seldom forget an act of kindness; and if, from mistake, they have committed an act of injustice, they will ever afterwards endeavour, by every means in their power, to efface it. Trust them, and you will find them worthy of your confidence; use them kindly, and they will, as I would wish to do now, follow you anywhere."

Since I heard Francisco repeat this little episode, I have seen something of Spanish character, and heard more; but I have never had reason to doubt the truth of what he said. I asked him why he did not leave France and return home. "Many times," said he, "has the same question been asked of me; but hitherto I have never told why I toiled at Port Vendre, in preference to going home, and leading an inactive life. I remain here, because I have an aged father and mother, and a sister helpless from her birth in my native village, who, but for the pittance which I

can send across to them by the muledrivers, would have 'ni pain, ni vin.'" Having said this, he darted out of the room, evidently to prevent my supposing that he had told his simple tale to obtain a few additional francs. Upon descending, I found that Francisco had gone, not, however, without procuring for me a guide to accompany me to Arles. He was a Catalan, and could not speak half-a-dozen words of French.

The valley of the Tech presents a far more pleasing and agreeable aspect, than the plains of Roussillon. Its alluvial soil, irrigated with the waters of the river, is rich and verdant. Meadows and pasturages are to be seen, and other trees than the sickly olive, are scattered around. This change of scene, and the prospect of being on the morrow among the mountains, breathing their fresh air, climbing their summits, and wandering among their valleys, exhilarated and delighted me. Flocks of sheep and goats were among the half-enclosed fields, and their keepers were everywhere milking the latter to provide for their breakfast. These shepherds never leave their flocks, but continue with them night and day. They have a simple mode of defending

themselves from the scorching rays of the noon-day sun, and the damps or rains of the night. A wattling of willow boughs, about eight feet square, is thatched with straw, and made so light, that they can easily transport it along with them from place to place. This original umbrella affords shade from the broiling heat; and at night, underneath it, rolled in his blanket, whilst the flock is protected by his dog, the shepherd sleeps soundly.

Ceret, where we halted to breakfast, is merely a village, built where the Alberès sink into the plain. Close to it, the Tech is spanned by a bridge of one arch, remarkable for its width and height, though of comparatively recent construction, and is thrown, from one rock to the other, over the broad and dark bed which the river forms beneath it. Its banks are here rugged and steep, bearing marks of the devastation which the river, swollen by the melting of the snow in the mountains, bears along its course. It is not during the winter that the rivers which derive their waters from the highest Pyreneés, are to be seen in all their glory of flood and foam; on the contrary, it is generally when the fine weather of

an early spring, and the heats of a southern sun prevail, that the stranger in the country is astonished to observe the Tech, the Garrone, the Adour, or other rivers of the mountains, while not a cloud is to be seen, and "all nature wears the mantle of repose," rolling through the plains, overflowing their banks, and deluging the country. It is difficult to decide which is the most sublime sight—which portrays most vividly the irresistible and overwhelming power of a river in flood, whether when it is seen raging, and tossing, and thundering over the rocks, and through the narrow gorges of the mountains, sweeping the huge pines of the forest along with it, and foaming in wrath at the obstacles which impede its destructive course—or when, bursting into the plain, no longer fettered and restrained by the bulwarks of its birthplace, it recks its vengeance on the surrounding districts.

I found it no easy matter in an Auberge, where none of the inmates spoke any language but their native Catalan, to make them understand what I wished to have for breakfast. I was, however, soon relieved from my dilemma by the entrance

of a young lad, who, understanding French, interpreted for me. My new acquaintance had been loitering upon the bridge when I passed, and, recognizing me as a stranger, supposed that I must have come to Ceret upon business connected with the iron forges in its vicinity. To this supposition I was indebted for his acquaintance; and, as his father was a proprietor of one of the forges, he followed me to inquire if I wished to purchase iron. I found him an amusing and intelligent little fellow, and acquired some information from him, as to the paths across the Canigoû, which I afterwards found very useful to me. Some how or other, he had become possessed of a French translation of Ossian's poems, of which he was greatly enamoured; and discovering that I came from the

"Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,"

he talked in raptures of Fingal, Morven, and the northern heroes. I could not help thinking how delighted the "Celtic Society" would have been to have heard this little mountaineer of Roussillon

recite, with energy, whole passages from the poetry of their native bard. From him I learnt of the insurrection in Barcelona, and that the whole Spanish frontier was now in a state of civil warfare.

As it was no great distance to Arles, and as I looked forward to having a lengthy journey on the following day, I walked leisurely up the valley, accompanied by my little friend, descanting upon the quantity and quality of iron produced from the forges of Roussillon.

Half-way between Ceret and Arles, upon a conical hill, resembling that which forms the site of Bellegarde, is the small fortification called Fort-les-Bains. It is composed of four bastions, and commands the road below; and, like other strongholds upon this frontier, was constructed by Vauban. Beneath it, is a village of the same name, distinguished for its mineral waters. It was known to the Romans (as indeed were almost the whole of the mineral sources in the Pyreneés), and over one of its springs is a vaulted roof, said to have been built by them: perhaps it may not; but, at all events, it is of very great antiquity. The valley towards Arles becomes narrower, but

increases in fertility and beauty; the vines clustering upon the banks and heights, the Indian corn or maize flourishing in the fields.

Some of the most considerable forges at Roussillon are situated at Arles, rendering it a place of some commerce. Like most other places of the Pyreneés and France, which derive their importance from forced trade in iron, it will, most probably, ere long feel the temporary miseries which a repeal of the iniquitous, and, to the inhabitants of France, most unjust, law, which imposes so high a rate of duty on foreign iron, as to compel them to purchase a dear and bad article, simply because it is made at home.

In the auberge to which I went, I found a Spanish Carlist who had escaped the slaughter of his party at Barcelona, and, travelling along the mountains, had arrived here the preceding night. He was a man of rank and large property, but so hurried had been his flight, and so difficult had he found it to elude pursuit, that he had not an article with him but the clothes which he wore, torn and soiled with his journey. He spoke of his misfortunes with

comparative indifference, and seemed most annoyed at the state of his apparel, being obliged to go before the Maire for a passport. I had no spare clothes to offer him, but, as I thought he would be more comfortable with a clean shirt, I asked him to accept one. He thanked me, and said, that a clean shirt would only—by contrasting with the state of his other habiliments—make his appearance more miserable, and that, as he would reach Perpignan in the course of a few hours, where he could supply himself with money or any other thing he wanted, it was scarcely necessary to make any alteration. In the course of the afternoon and succeeding night, several more Carlists crossed the mountains and arrived in Arles, some of them in a much worse condition than the grandee to whom I had offered a shirt.

As I intended to ascend the Canigoû, should the weather of the following day be favourable, my first object in Arles was to secure a good guide, and with the assistance of my friend from Ceret, I had little difficulty in obtaining one. It was arranged that we should leave Arles by daybreak, and after the ascent of the Canigoû, sleep

at the forge of Valmania, in the little valley of Lentilla. The few travellers who have ascended the Canigoû, have generally slept either at Corsavi, a village upon the Arles side of the mountain, and from which the ascent is tedious; or, crossing to Valmania, mounted from the other side. The latter is the shortest and easiest to accomplish, as it is necessary, when starting from Corsavi, to turn the flank of the mountain, in order to ascend it, which is not the case upon the side towards Valmania. The ascent from Arles had not hitherto been attempted; the road being so much longer than from either Corsavi or Valmania; but being somewhat of a pedestrian, I did not fear the undertaking.

There is a path into Spain by the Prat de Mollo, the last French village at the source of the Tech. It was, however, now impassable to the mule-drivers, and others engaged in traffic across the frontier, who were bitterly cursing the civil war, which now raged along it, putting a stop to every kind of commerce. The French suffered equally with the Spaniards by this war, and all along the whole line of the Pyreneés, I heard nothing but lamentation at the want of employ-

ment and inconvenience which the disturbed state of the Spanish frontier occasioned.

We left Arles at five the next morning, in company with a troop of muleteers belonging to the forges, who every day cross to the mines upon the Valmania side of the Canigoû, for the mineral smelted at Arles. There was a string of mules, in number about fifty, decked in housings and trappings of all colours. The path by which we left the village, and indeed all the way across the flank of the Canigoû, admits of only single file; the consequence of which is, that, when met by loaded mules returning from the mines, accidents sometimes happen from the difficulty of passing each other—some of them not unfrequently rolling over the steeps. I had always had considerable doubts of the mule being fully entitled to the high character generally bestowed upon it for steadiness and security of footing among the mountains, and saw no reason why the horse should not be equally so. I was here and afterwards convinced that my suspicions were well founded, and that the mule possessed not the safety imputed to it. Frequent stumbles, and an examination of the knees of the troop, was evidence

not to be contradicted; and the curious circumstance was elucidated, that five horses, which had carried mineral as long as most of the mules had done, were perfectly sound. The only reason which can be given for the mule having acquired the character which it has, is, that it is much more frequently used among the mountains, on account of its being more able to endure hunger and fatigue. The horse is as safe to ride among rocks and precipices, if bred among them; and I would far rather trust my neck to them than to the generality of mules I have seen. With the bridle upon the neck of one of these ponies, and allowing him to take his own time (which a mule always does, whether his rider wishes or not), I have descended some steeps which would require to be seen in order to judge of the animal's merits.

The mules employed in transporting the ore from the mines to the forges, are furnished each with a pair of panniers, in which they can only convey a very small quantity, as it is none of the purest, and it thus requires many mule's loads to produce a small weight of iron. Could they smelt the ore at the mines, an enormous saving might be effected; but in this case the charcoal

must be conveyed from such a distance to them as to render the expense nearly equal to that of bringing the ironstone to Arles. All the forges in the Pyreneés are similarly situated. The ore has to be brought to them for some leagues in one direction, the fuel for some leagues in another, and in no instance have I seen them united, consequently rendering the price of iron very high, almost prohibiting the country from making use of it even in their most necessary articles.

This accounts for the rude nature of the agricultural implements in France. The high price of iron prevents their adopting the more improved methods of cultivating the soil; and until their short-sighted and interested government repeal the obnoxious duties on foreign iron, both the agricultural and manufacturing interests of the country—from the impossibility of obtaining an article the most necessary for their prosperity at any thing short of a ruinous price—must continue to remain stationary, while other countries, aware of the benefit of a liberal commercial law, prosper and precede it.

The guide who accompanied me understood

little French; but he was so very intelligent, that we could easily, when we did not understand each other's language, communicate by signs. For the first five hours we kept company with the muleteers, who relieved my guide from the burden of my valise, and undertook to convey it to Valmania. The ascent was along one of the ridges which branch from the Canigoû; and when we gained its crest near the old watch-tower of Batères, we were at the bottom of another ridge, which led to the base of the higher summits of the Canigoû. At this old tower, from which we could look down upon the valleys of the Tech and Tet, we sat down to eat the breakfast which we had brought with us.

Passing along the crest of this ridge, we skirted the side of the mountain, until we had arrived at the place most easy of ascent. Hoary-looking pines of great size dotted the sides of the narrow gorges and steeps, where the hatchet of the charbonniers could not reach them. Among the rocks were numerous plants of the rhododendron; and wherever there was a patch of soil, the white and purple anemone abounded.

Leaving the region of woods and plants, and

scrambling for three or four hours up the steeps and along precipices, and over snow-wreaths, we gained the summit of the Canigoû. The few strangers who have ascended the Canigoû, have almost always been disappointed in the view which can be obtained from it. Bad weather has wholly or partially obscured the country; sometimes the mists hanging on the French, sometimes on the Spanish, side of the mountain, but generally either upon one or the other. Most fortunately upon this occasion, the fates had proved more propitious, and permitted me from the crest of the Canigoû to look down upon a scene finer by far than I had ever beheld, and perhaps ever shall do again. The atmosphere was clear and free from haze, and not a speck of cloud could be discerned within the horizon. So favoured, I saw, stretched beneath me, the whole plains of Roussillon; and beyond them, the low coast of Languedoc, where it fringes the Mediterranean. Perpignan and its citadel seemed almost within cannon-shot, and washed by the waves of the sea, in reality several miles beyond it. Then there was the long line of the Alberès, each valley of whose bosom I could look into, and distinguish

their torrents like silvery threads winding through them. To the south-east of the Alberès lay the provinces of Spain, fruitful in all the miseries of civil discord, and upon whose plains, within the limits of my vision, even now were enacting scenes of butchery and slaughter. More directly south rose the mountain-ranges of Catalonia, peak upon peak appearing in the distance with all their host of inferior summits scattered around them. Turning to the east, I could survey all the numberless little valleys which border the Tet. Ille, Prades, and other towns chequered the plain; and the chain of mountains which divide Roussillon from Ariège and the department of the Aude, closed in this magnificent panorama upon the west and north.

To imagine the grandeur and sublimity of this bird's-eye view of a prospect which my powers of description would in vain attempt to portray, the reader must suppose himself standing upon a pinnacle from nine to ten thousand feet above the surrounding district, with comparatively few intervening objects to limit a horizon of from thirty to sixty miles. He must then, with all the advantages of the finest weather, enhanced by the

bright sky and pure atmosphere of the south, suppose himself from his aërial height looking down upon this great extent of country, its villages and houses appearing no larger than molehills, its greatest rivers dwindled into streams, and enclosures of every kind being imperceptible; the whole plain resembling one vast garden, its trees becoming shrubs, its great fields of vines distinguishable merely by the tinge of verdure which they give to the landscape. He can then, by turning round, vary the prospect to one of "woods, and wilds, and solitary places," trace the range of the Pyreneés as far as his eye can reach, even to the Maladetta and Mont Perdu, and again look upon no small portion of the land of dark eyes and darker deeds.

Having indulged in the contemplation of this scene, until my sight ached with straining to take in the more distant objects, and it was time to begin the descent; I was obliged to quit a scene whose "like I ne'er may look upon again." Its glory has, however, been so strongly impressed upon my memory, that in imagination I can at will recall its features. The descent upon Valmania is in some places so difficult and dangerous

as to deter many an *aspirant*, who would otherwise essay to reach the summit of the Canigoû, and who, in order to palliate their faint-heartedness, have propagated many a wild and incredible tale of its (to them) insurmountable precipices and yawning gulfs; but no one with a tolerable pair of legs, good lungs, and not altogether unaccustomed to mountain-climbing, ought to be discouraged from making the attempt. Should he succeed, he will find himself amply repaid for his toil and fatigue.

Excepting at those places where it was necessary to use a little caution, we descended at a sharp trot, and arrived at Valmania before three o'clock. We came down on the side of the ravine opposite to where the most considerable mines of iron ore were working. These mines surround the Canigoû, and are all nearly at the same height, at the junction of the granite and the limestone. Valmania consists of a few houses occupied by the miners, and others connected with the forges. It is a wild and solitary place, and near it are the ruins of what has been in other times a considerable castle. It was one of the few places of the kind in the Pyreneés which

came up to the idea I had in my boyhood formed of them from the never-to-be-forgotten *Mysteries of Udolpho.* I do not suppose that the authoress ever could have seen this castle of Valmania, but it would be difficult to find a place more suited to the lawless purposes of a feudal chief than a stronghold in this savage and secluded little valley. The old watch-tower of Batères, situated some thousand feet above Valmania, and appertaining to its lord, could give him timely warning of the approach of either friends or foes.

We went to the little auberge, which accorded well with the poverty and misery of the place. It consisted of one large room, and a smaller one within it; the outer serving as kitchen, and for all the purposes of an auberge; the inner, as a sleeping apartment for the whole family. I found the family at dinner, which consisted of vegetable soup, bread, and wine; and I made myself perfectly at home by sitting down at the table, and helping myself to some of the soup; which had, however, such a seasoning of garlic that I could not partake of it. One of the party, observing me put aside my plate, addressed me in French; which I had never thought of using,

as I supposed myself among people who only spoke Catalan. This individual, however, like myself, was not a native, but had come hither on business, namely, to patch the old, and make the new garments of the inhabitants of the valley, should any of them be so extravagant as to indulge in such a luxury. So I found here the old custom prevalent in the remote parts of my own country, even at the present day; where the periodical arrival of Snip, the tailor, is looked forward to with no small anxiety in many a little hamlet. By the assistance of the tailor I procured some fresh eggs, which I soon cooked for myself. Here, for the first time, I drank wine out of the curiously-shaped bottle, chiefly in use among the Spaniards. It is made very flat and round, with a long neck, and still longer, but very narrow, spout. Glasses are not in general use, and therefore every one drinks from the bottle; there is more delicacy, however, displayed than in our old English way of using silver cups and porter pots, as they never, by any chance, apply the spout to the mouth, but, holding it at arm's length, send the liquor, like a jet from a fountain, down the throat. I did as I

saw others do, but found there was more science required than I was aware of; for, not having made the neck and funnel of the bottle describe the proper angle, I discharged the contents in my bosom. I made particular inquiries whether any "Anglais" had found his way to this spot, but could not ascertain that any had.

From Valmania to Prades, the chief town of the valley of the Tet, I was told that it was five hours' walk; but, as the evening was fine, I resolved, if possible, to find my way there. But, on sending through the village, neither mule nor animal of any kind was to be procured, nor a guide to accompany me. I did not, however, relish sleeping "en famille," with all the inmates of the house, and proposed to the Catalan (whom I had only engaged to come to Valmania) to proceed with me to Prades; who, after starting some difficulties as to the length of the day's journey, fatigue, &c., agreed to go with me; and we lost no time in setting off. The walk down the little valley of Lentilla, among the hills which lie between Valmania and Prades, is in many places beautiful and picturesque.

In passing through the little village of Estoher,

I was accosted by the "medicin" of the place, who very politely asked me to enter his house, and take some refreshment. I was nothing loath to obtain some fresh wine, as the skin we had brought with us was now empty, and we had still some miles to travel. Our conversation was upon the all-engrossing theme at that period, the cholera, a case of which the little doctor was most anxious to see; more, I suspected, for the honour of having to report it to the medical board at Paris, with his sage remarks appended thereto, than for the purpose of acquiring additional medical experience.

In the course of an hour we were upon the great road from Perpignan to Prades. The valley of the Tet, which commences at Vinca, a town five or six miles below Prades, is even more fertile than that of the Tech at Arles. Maize, buckwheat, and hemp, are the staple products; and vineyards and orchards abound, where the finest peaches of the south are raised, and exported to Toulouse and other great cities.

It was nearly dark when I got into Prades, and found my way to its best hotel, as may be supposed somewhat fatigued with a mountain

walk of almost fifteen hours. Prades is the second place in the department, and a sous-prefecture; so, I inquired of the landlord if he thought I could have my passport countersigned that evening, as I wished to proceed early next morning. He advised me to call upon the Prefet, and try if he would oblige me. I did so, and found the magistrate in his gown and slippers, little expecting a visit upon business at so late an hour. I handed him my passport, and requested him to "viser" it for Ax or Foix, passing through the republic of Andorre. He soon discovered its irregularity, and asked me how it came that I had not had it examined at Perpignan. I said, that the same reason which brought me to him at so late an hour was the cause of this want of form. I was anxious to leave Perpignan; and, its Prefet being from home, I did not wait his return. He said, that he was sorry for it, but that it was quite contrary to the rules to sign an irregular passport, particularly as he had received orders to be strict in examining any English who were proceeding towards the frontier with a view of joining Don Carlos; and, therefore I should be obliged to

return to Perpignan. I said, that this would be very hard, and hoped that he would not put me to such inconvenience. He then, among other questions, asked me, where I had come from that morning. I told him that I had slept the preceding night at Arles, and had crossed the mountains to Prades, visiting the summit of the Canigoû upon the way. Upon my telling him this, he folded up my passport, and delivered it to me, saying, "Sir, it is impossible that any person but a mountaineer could have come from Arles, far less have been at the top of the Canigoû. Take your passport, Sir. Good evening." I insisted that what I said to him was true; but it would not do. "It is impossible—it is impossible!" was his answer.

The passport I held in my hand was one which I had received at Bordeaux, eleven months before; from which town it was "visé" for Pan, and *Les eaux thermales des Pyrenées.* I never observed this until twisting it in my hand, irritated at the unbelief of the Prefet; when the thought struck me, that my passport must be good for almost any place in the Pyrenees, which abounded with "les eaux thermales." The tables

were now turned; for I pointed to the words, and said, that since he would neither sign my passport, nor believe what I said, that I should proceed next day with my passport as it was, there being many mineral sources in the district I wished to pass through, and to which I could go, if I chose. At the same time, as I did not wish to leave him while he imagined that I had not made the day's journey which I said I had done, I would request of him to send one of his servants to the hotel for the Catalan who had come along with me, and he might question him as to its truth.

He complied; and, as good fortune would have it, the guide was well-known to him, and the fact which he doubted was at once established. Then came civility in abundance; my passport was signed as I wished it; and I returned to the hotel. I engaged the landlord's horse and servant to accompany me upon the morrow as far as the Tour de Carol (if we could accomplish the distance), and was very soon after asleep, in a more comfortable bed than I could have found had I remained at Valmania.

CHAPTER V.

Pedestrianism—Environs of Prades—Family d'Aria—Villefranche—Character of its Fortifications—Virnet, and its mineral Springs—Appearance of the Valley—Ollete—Detachment of French Soldiers—Village and Fastness of Mont Louis—Descent into the Valley of the Cerdagne—Arrival at the Tour de Carol—Luxuries of its Auberge—Battle between the Carlists and Christinos—Advised not to visit Andorre—Best mode of choosing Guides—Novel Night-quarters—Departure for Andorre—Arrival of the British Legion in Spain, and its influence upon English Travellers in the Frontiers—Opinion of their probable Success—Character of our Party—Towers of Charlemagne—Inhabitants of the Valley—Their Industry—Favourite Springs of the Mountaineers—Intelligence of the Carlists—Their Depredations on the Shepherds—Pass their Fire of the preceding Night—Enter Andorre—Discovery of the Marauders—Preparations for a Fight—Advance and Retreat of the Carlists—Wild Scenery—Covey of Partridges—Andorrian Piscator—Arrival at the Forge of Escaldos.

MOUNTED upon the landlord's horse, I left

Prades "au point du jour" the next morning. Fond as I am of walking, I have never been able to reconcile myself to pedestrianism upon the great roads, and have always availed myself of the most expeditious mode of travelling when I have been obliged to follow them, quitting them whenever my destination permitted me. The pedestrian has many great advantages over every other traveller, not only in seeing the country through which he passes, but in becoming better acquainted with the manners and the customs of their people. Among hills, and mountains, and valleys, he is the most independent, and I think most enviable, being in existence; he throws care of every kind to the winds, and nothing comes amiss to him — nothing annoys him but bad weather; and even then he can console himself with

"Fighting his battles o'er again,"

or chalking out upon his map his future route, by no means the most unpleasant occupation of a traveller. There is one essential, however, which is necessary for all travellers to carry about

with them, but particularly the pedestrian and unpossessed of which, I would most strenuously advise him to remain at home; it is a cheerful and contented mind under all circumstances. Bad dinners, indifferent beds, fatiguing journeys, and surly landlords, must never discompose him; never be felt as more than the expected annoyances incidental to the character he has assumed, and giving additional zest to the many real pleasures which no one but the pedestrian traveller can fully estimate and enjoy.

In the environs of Prades, the banks to the right and left of the Tet are spotted with villages, and clustered with old chateaux. Among those upon the right is the hamlet of the Ria, which either took its name from, or gave it to a family renowned in history. From the family of d'Ria are descended the Counts of Barcelona, whose posterity have given kings and queens to Arragon, Navarre, Castile, Portugal, Majorca, Naples, Sicily, and France. Thus the greater part of the reigning sovereigns of Europe, can trace their descent from the original proprietor of the little village of Ria.

The valley begins to contract soon after leaving

Prades, and at Villefranche there is little more space than suffices for the river and the two narrow streets which compose the town. Villefranche has the honour of being one of the first towns fortified by Vauban, and it does no great credit to his early genius. It was a strange thought to construct a fortress in the hollow of a narrow gorge, where the enemy, out of reach of its guns, could, from the heights above, pour their vollies into every window of the place. It was founded in 1105, by Raymond, Count of Conflens and the Cerdagne, and has several times been in the hands of the Spaniards.

In a little valley leading to the Canigoû, and through which, from Villefranche, there is a tolerable road, is Virnet, the most noted mineral watering-place in this part of the South; it is the Bagnères of Roussillon and Languedoc; and during the season, which lasts from June to September, there are a considerable number of strangers in the village. The botanist will find almost the whole of the Pyrenean plants in its vicinity, and the Canigoû and its inferiors afford no small field to the mineralogist. But with these advantages and its pretty situation, its

walks and gardens, it cannot compete with many other mineral sources in the Pyreneés, where all its merits are possessed in an equal degree, besides the luxury of a cooler temperature, for those who are in delicate health; and more magnificent scenery in their neighbourhood, for those who visit the Pyreneés with other intentions than to quaff their unpalatable waters, or stew themselves in their sudatories.

From Villefranche, the Tet is inclosed by arid and sterile heights, destitute of wood and cultivation; many parts of their sides, lashed by the rains, and swept over by the mountain torrents, have been stripped of their covering of grass or brushwood, and rendered far more unpleasant to look upon than rocks and precipices. I breakfasted at Ollete, the next village in the valley, built after the most approved Spanish architecture—the streets as narrow and dirty as they could well be. I left Ollete in company with a detachment of French soldiers "en route" for Mont Louis, and escorting a long train of mules bearing baggage and necessaries for its garrison. The road, soon after leaving Ollete, turns an elbow of the ridge; and ascending, it

becomes, where this elbow nearly touches the precipice on the opposite side of the river, a pass of uncommon beauty, and, as a place of defence, of great strength. Accordingly it has been fortified by the ancient lords of the valley, who have built upon it several strong gateways and buttresses, and the descent is by a flight of steps cut in the rock.

The detachment of soldiers and mules were in advance of me; and, as they marched through the many windings of this key of the valley, their arms and accoutrements glittering with the sunbeams, and the surrounding and overhanging cliffs echoing to the mirth and hilarity which reigned among them, gave a character of life and animation to the scene exceedingly picturesque.

Passing the detachment, which, encumbered with its baggage, was proceeding slower than the distance we had to travel before night would permit us to do, we soon afterwards passed through the upper and uninteresting part of this valley, and entered upon the extensive plain or table-land which surrounds the fortress of Mont Louis. This vast plateau bears a striking resemblance to many of the upland districts of Scotland. It is divided

into farms of considerable extent, with well-built slated houses; the fields partially inclosed by grey stone walls, and abounding with irrigated meadows. The hills which border it are of no great height, and the pines and shrubs which cover them add greatly to the Scottish appearance of the place. The auberge was comfortable and clean, and I was fully recompensed for my indifferent breakfast by an excellent dinner, chiefly composed of game. The citadel of Mont Louis is built upon a conical hill, at some distance from the village, and is large and well fortified. It was built by Louis the Fourteenth, and fortified by Vauban to defend this passage into Spain, one of the most frequent and easiest in the district. I did not envy the garrisons shut up in such places as Bellegarde and Fort-le-bains, but here I should have had no objections to pass some weeks in a clean and comfortable inn, where I could enjoy myself either as a sportsman or a naturalist. There is a path into Ariege by Les Angles from Mont Louis.

Half an hour's walk from the village of Mont Louis brought us to the point from which the road descends the Col de Perche into the valley

of the Cerdagne. The Cerdagne, at least the French part of it, is erroneously called a valley, for it consists of a large and extensive basin into which many lateral valleys open; and there are several small rivers which cross it, and afterwards unite with the Seyre, which has its source in one of these valleys. From this point of the Col de Perche, the whole of the French Cerdagne can be looked over, with its boundaries of Spanish towns and villages; so completely is it situated upon the Spanish side of the mountain, that in many places the boundary line is a mere ditch or rivulet.

We shortened the journey by quitting the road and descending some ravines, awkward enough places for a horse to step over; but the animal we had neither flinched from them nor lost his footing—I suppose that he knew better than to try the effects of the fall he would have had. St. Pierre was the first village we arrived at, and from it we walked through well-cultivated fields of rich and productive soil until we came to Saillagousse, the largest town in the French Cerdagne. It is situated upon a rising ground overhanging the Seyre, which, swelled by the many tributaries it

has already received, is even here a considerable river, and looked very like a good trouting stream. It has the remains of some old buildings which seemed of very ancient architecture and great size.

Between Saillagousse and the Tour de Carol, where I intended my day's journey to end, I had to cross one or two of the small ridges which shut out the French part of the Cerdagne from the valley of the Carol. I found a cordon of French soldiers along the frontier, and had more than once to produce my passport before I was allowed to proceed. About seven o'clock we arrived at the Tour de Carol, drenched by some heavy thunder showers which had fallen since we passed Saillagousse. As usual, the first person I met on entering the village was a gendarme, who took me to the best auberge in the place. Bad was the best; the host of it was the butcher of the village, and the under part of it being used in the way of business, the upper part in hot weather could not be very agreeable. There was, however, always one consolation, and that was, that I should not starve. While changing my wet clothes, the landlord, a lad of nineteen, made

his appearance, and asked what I would have for my supper; adding, that I had only to order what I wished, and he could give it me, having, he said, killed both sheep and oxen upon the previous day. "The valley is filled with soldiers," said he, "and, as I supply them with meat, I have always a great stock in hand." What an hotel for a gourmand! What a pity for such creatures that in England it is not fashionable to unite the sciences of ox-killing and inn-keeping!

While supping, the gendarme who had carried off my passport to the superior officers in the village, returned with it. He was a civil and obliging person, and gave me information as to the state of the district. From him I learnt, that had I arrived in the village the preceding day, I might have mounted to the top of the low ridge in front of the auberge, the summit of which is the boundary line between the two countries, and looking into the valley below, been witness to a battle between the Carlists and Christinos; and he believed, that at Puycerda, and in its vicinity, they were now fighting. Regarding Andorre he could not give me any authentic accounts; but he knew that no one thought of going there in the present state of the

war, when it was not probable that either of the Spanish parties would respect the neutrality of the little republic. I mentioned my anxious desire to visit Andorre, and my determination to attempt it, if I could get some men of the Carol to accompany me who could be depended upon, and who were well acquainted with the country, upon which he offered to go and make inquiries as to the practicability of procuring guides.

He returned in a short time, accompanied by his officer, and the Maire of the village, whose earnest advice was, not to think of visiting Andorre, particularly, as that afternoon, reports had come down the valley, that parties of the Carlists had been seen upon the French marches with Andorre. I had, however, come to the Tour de Carol for the express purpose of exploring the (to me) most interesting valleys of the Pyreneés, where, almost unknown to the world, had existed a republic since the days of Charlemagne; so I at once determined that nothing short of positive danger should deter me from visiting them, and my friends, when they found that I could not be dissuaded, very kindly set

about making themselves useful to me in many ways.

I should always recommend the traveller, when he is in a district with which he is unacquainted, and wishes to procure guides, or to acquire information which may be of consequence to him on his journey, to apply to some of the authorities of the place,—the Maire, for instance, a magistrate with which every French village is provided. He will find that, by acting in this manner, he will neither be cheated nor imposed upon, which the idle and interested of every country through which he passes, are both willing and ready to attempt; he has, besides, the great advantage of obtaining the best guides, and the most authentic information; and, above all, he will entail upon the authorities who aided him, a responsibility which, should the guides provided by them not make their appearance, will ensure inquiries being instituted concerning him. Upon this occasion, when there was some necessity for being particular as to the character of those who were to accompany me, I obtained, through the civility of the Maire, individuals whom I afterwards found

were not only intimately acquainted with the country, but men whom I could have trusted on any emergency.

It was arranged, that I should take four men of the valley along with me, and that we should travel prepared for whatever might happen; to avoid the Carlists when their numbers rendered it advisable to do so, or to meet any small parties which might be out among the mountains. We knew that they were badly armed, and were not, but when in numbers, to be dreaded; so that our party was quite large enough for the occasion. Every thing being thus satisfactorily adjusted, my obliging friends, with many wishes for an agreeable journey, bade me good-night. The room I supped in was, I found, to be my sleeping apartment, and not only mine, but that of the landlord, his wife, and her two sisters. Matters were here, however, better arranged than they would have been at Valmania, where had I remained, I should have been obliged to repose, "en famille," with the whole establishment, the idiot old woman of a domestic included. The family chamber at Carol was, although, indeed, somewhat after a patriarchal fashion, a very different sort of place. It

was a large room, with windows to the front and back; and in each of the sides were two recesses sufficiently large to contain a bed, and chair to put one's clothes upon; in front of each of these four recesses hung down a piece of cloth, the dimensions of which, in comparison to the size of the aperture which they were meant to inclose, indicated either that the tapissier had sadly miscalculated in fitting them, or that they had wofully shrunk in the last washing. The family party retired to rest in the eastern recesses of the chamber, I (I suppose from having to be early on foot in the morning) in the western. This juxtaposition to my host's household, who during the first ten minutes I was in bed, and before the fatigues of the day had rendered me insensible to outward impressions, indulged themselves in nasal conversations, did not disturb my repose; for when I awoke in the morning, I found that they were all up, and my breakfast got ready for me.

In many parts of the Pyreneés which are never visited but by those whose business of some kind or other leads them into their wilds, the appearance of a stranger, but especially of one who has no other object in view but amusement, is suffi-

cient to throw a whole village into commotion. So it was at Carol; and, although soon after daylight, when we left the village its inhabitants were assembled to see us off, and to bid their friends good-bye.

The leader of our little band was a considerable proprietor in the valley, who was well known to the Andorrians, with whom he was in the habit of transacting business of various kinds, —legal or illegal is of no consequence to the reader,—and was as intimately acquainted with each nook of their country as he was with his own valley. A better guide I could not have had; his character among the Andorrians ensured us a good reception from them, while his knowledge of their country would enable us to elude the Carlists, should we find them in the district.

I ought to mention, that the English auxiliaries had just at this period arrived in the North of Spain; and that, therefore, all safety to those of their countrymen travelling in the northern provinces of that kingdom had vanished, from the moment that they set foot in the Spanish soil. The partisans of Don Carlos were not confined to the mere districts in which Zumalacarregui and

his battalions were fighting for him, they were scattered all over the country, in some places not so numerous as in others; but every where were to be found in sufficient numbers to revenge upon the solitary traveller what they styled the unjust, the tyrannical, and, by the majority of the Spanish people, uncalled for interference of his countrymen in their national quarrel. Even those of the Queen's party whom I met with at various times, did not show themselves so grateful on the occasion as might have been expected; indeed, so apparently indifferent were they as to what became of the British Legion, that its probable situation made me fear that my countrymen would be treated as I was myself, from an act of interference in the village of Nay (in Bearn): I was one day passing through its market-place, when I saw a man beating his wife, as I thought, most barbarously; so much so, that—advocate as I am for allowing all domestic quarrels to be settled by the parties themselves—I could not help interfering upon this occasion. Accordingly, I laid hold of the husband; and, taking his stick from him, reproached him for his cowardice in striking a woman; but, as usual, the third party

had the worst of it. The passion of both the husband and wife was turned upon me, and the reward of my mistaken kindness was a jug of dirty water thrown about me by the woman, and not a few "sacres" sent after me by the man, as I walked away, satisfied that this case of seeming barbarity ought not to have seduced me from the observation of the golden rule by which every witness to domestic broils should be guided—non-interference. Whether my countrymen in the north of Spain may be treated eventually by the Christinos and Carlists in this ungrateful manner, I cannot altogether take upon me to say; but, they may rest assured, that, bravely as they may conduct themselves in a cause which has for its object the establishment of liberty of person and of conscience in one of the finest countries of Europe, where at present there is neither; and, successful though they prove, their best reward will be their own satisfaction, and the encomiums of Europe upon their gallantry. From the Spaniards, liberated or not, they will receive—few thanks, and less pay.

Etienne, the leader of our party, was accompanied by his son and two nephews; all three,

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fine active young men, chasseurs of the izard and bear from their infancy, and possessing no slight knowledge of the means by which the cunning and vigilance of the most perfect douanier could be evaded and laughed at. The morning was fine, and we set out in high spirits, equipped as if for the chace. At Courbassil, a little village a couple of miles beyond the Tour de Carol, we were stopped by a sentinel posted at the bridge, until the officer of the outpost had examined our baggage to discover whether we were not carrying powder over the frontier; only a small quantity is allowed to each peasant; but we had no more with us than what was in our flasks, so we were not detained. This was the last outpost upon this side of the valley.

Higher up the valley than Courbassil, we came to the old chateau from which the valley takes its name—the Tour de Carol. It is curiously situated. The valley is not broad, and the mountains which inclose it, particularly upon the northern and highest side, are excessively rugged and precipitous; the castle has been built upon an immense and isolated block of granite, which may have been supposed to have detached itself

from the shattered looking mountain above it, and rolled into the centre of the valley. Some walls, and two high towers, are the remains of it, and are held in great respect by the inhabitants of the district, who would not take away a stone of it, even to prevent their own house from falling. I could not help contrasting this veneration for an ancient time-worn pile with the destroying propensities of some proprietors of my own country, who, to effect a paltry saving in some new building, or *march dyke*, have pulled down and carried off the materials which composed fabrics of historical interest, or sacred to the district from traditionary lore.

The towers of Carol are supposed to have been built by the Moors, who were masters of the valley until Charlemagne drove them out of it; and in commemoration of the victory which he had gained over them, his name was given to the Moorish castle, as well as to the whole valley. No wonder that the peasants venerate a pile which even bears the name of their great deliverer, and would deem as sacrilegious any hand that touched it, but that of time.

Every thing in the valley of Carol, notwith-

standing its proximity to Spain, is essentially French; its inhabitants, in their manners, their dress, their language, and their nationality, might have been a hundred miles within the frontier. Small as it is, there is more industry in it than in almost any other of the Pyreneés. In winter, when agricultural and other pursuits are put a stop to, the men are engaged in the manufacture of thread; the women, in knitting stockings, of which there are many thousand pairs annually exported to different parts of France. The wool made use of is Spanish; and, previous to the civil war, which has destroyed every thing of the kind, this valley was the entrepôt of an extensive commerce carried on between the two countries.

The valley, soon after passing the towers of Charlemagne, becomes a perfect chaos of rocks, among which winds the path and river, until the latter divides into two branches. Upon the streams, which come from the mountains on the right, are the two villages of Porta and Porte, near the path which is used as a communication practicable both for horses and pedestrians with the Ariege. Had I been going to Ax or Foix, I

should have taken that route. The path into Andorre follows the stream to the left, and leads into an upper valley, which, although wild, is very pleasing. Its bosom is one long narrow meadow, studded with rocks, overgrown with ivy and wild flowers. It is one of the many mountain-gardens which I have unexpectedly stumbled upon in the Pyreneés, in situations where they never would be looked for, or supposed to exist. Near the centre of it, and in front of the enormous and curiously-shaped perpendicular wall of rock, called Peryfourche, where there was an excellent spring of water, we sat down to eat our breakfast. The appearance of the Peryforke may be imagined from the name it bears; it is, in all respects, excepting that of dimensions, the counterpart of the Pic du Midi of Pau.

Every spring of good water among the mountains, is known to the shepherds and chasseurs, and they invariably resort to their favourite wells when they make their repasts; and hungry although they sometimes are, I have often seen them carry a piece of bread or meat untouched for several miles, rather than eat it before they reached their usual fountain; and then sitting

down, and pulling out their clasp-knife, eat their dinner; and this they do when they frequently make no more use of the water than to rinse the glass (if they have one) from which they drink their wine. The traveller can indulge in one great luxury by means of these fountains; he has nothing more to do than to sink his bottle or wineskin in their waters for a few minutes, and he can drink its contents as well iced and cooled as ever the most experienced butler gave him his champagne or hock in England.

At the upper end of this valley we heard some one call to us from the mountain side, whom Etienne recognized as one of the shepherds who had charge of the flocks belonging to the vallies. At certain seasons of the year, the flocks belonging to the communes are driven to the highest pastures, and tended by two or three individuals who never leave their flocks, and are seldom seen, except by the chasseurs, until the rains or storms drive them lower down. They live upon milk, and cheese which they make themselves, and once a fortnight some of their friends in the valley bring them their bread.

Etienne, when he saw the shepherds, not alone,

but with the flocks so far from the pastures where they ought to have been, immediately said, that as there was no appearance of bad weather, some extraordinary circumstance must have driven them down; accordingly, when we joined them, they told us, that they had, the previous night, been roused from their hut by a party of Carlists, who took from them all their cheese and provisions, and had threatened to shoot them; and that being afraid of another visit, they had at daylight collected their flocks together, and come down from the higher pastures. This party of Carlists had, therefore, been upon the French territory, and considerably within it; and from the circumstance of the Ariege district being almost to a man French Carlists, and the shepherds stating that the party had packages with them, I concluded that they had been across the frontier to obtain ammunition from some of their French allies.

Etienne advised the shepherds to return to their pastures, after having procured bread from the villages, as he was of opinion they would not be annoyed by the Carlists again, who, from their

conduct upon the French territory, which had hitherto been respected by both parties, he suspected must have been "mauvais sujets," who had taken advantage of the disturbed state of the country to do mischief for mischief's sake, and "not real Carlists belonging to the neighbouring districts." We found the number of the marauding party to consist of eleven, very indifferently armed, so that we would have no reason to avoid a meeting with them, which it was not unlikely we should have, as they would most probably have rested after leaving the shepherds, either about the head of the valley in which we were, or in the next, which, belonging to Andorre, was neutral ground.

At the very crest of the ridge, and where a step to one side or the other would have been either into France or Andorre, we found the remains of a fire still smouldering, which must evidently have been lit by the party we had heard of; they must have carried their wood a considerable distance to burn it at this spot in security, for there are neither trees nor shrubs near it. They certainly had not been gone half an hour, or the

fire would have been extinguished; so we kept together, as we crossed the frontier into Andorre, and looked about for the party in advance of us.

This valley of Andorre is encircled by rocky mountains, and is one of the high pastures belonging to it, and frequented only for a short period of the year, by their flocks. Excepting alongside of the stream, there is little pasture; it debouches into the Spanish valley of Paillas, which runs across it, and presents its mountains covered with dark forests. There is not even a shrub in the Andorre valley large enough to conceal a dog, so that, excepting some masses of rock scattered about, there was nothing to prevent our taking in at a glance every object it contained; we were, therefore surprised upon not seeing the party, who could be but a short distance from us.

We had descended into the valley, and skirting its stream for about one half its length, had begun to ascend the opposite mountains, when Etienne discovered the party which we were on the look out for. They were at a considerable distance from us; and no one but a chasseur of izards would have discerned them passing in the shade

of the summits of the ridge we had quitted. The shepherds had either in their fear miscounted their numbers, or they had been joined by others, for there were now thirteen of them together. We halted to observe them; at first they took no notice of us (although we must have been in their sight ever since we had descended into the valley), seemingly satisfied that the shade of the dark mass above them prevented their being seen; at last, however, when they saw that they had been discovered, they stopped to consider what they should do. We did the same; Etienne was of opinion, that we should instantly proceed, and put the hill-side between us and them, which, from the start which we should have had, would, even in competition with Spanish *spartilleas*, have been by no means a very difficult task. His son was, however, of a different opinion; he thought that we should remain where we were, and take our chance of their coming down to us. As they had baggage, attacking us was not worth their while, unless they supposed us to be something better than peasants, and besides, our apparent indifference as to whether they came on or not, would most probably have the effect of deterring

them from doing so. I was of the same opinion, and it was determined that we should remain.

Presently, ten of the party above us, leaving their bundles with the remainder, began to descend the mountain. Etienne again proposed that we should start; but he was overruled. The only precautions which we took, were to separate a little from each other, and sit down; so that, should we be fired at, they would, at least, have to pick out their shots, and have less chance of hitting us; while we could have the advantage of a more deliberate aim. Down the fellows came. The affair wore a business-like aspect; and my companions new primed their muskets. I had no less than two brace of pistols with me; for one of the gendarmes at Carol, finding I had only a pair of pocket articles, insisted upon my taking a pair of his, which could be returned to him with the guides; so I was sufficiently well provided; and the staff I carried, looked, I have no doubt, very like a musket at a distance.

When they came nearer us, we could see that only six of them had muskets, the others had, probably, no weapons but their knives; which a

Spaniard never, by any chance, is without, and which he knows well how to use. We were not to fire until they had either done so, or given such unequivocal signs of their hostility that there could be no doubts of their intentions. They never stopped until they reached the little plain which lay between us and the mountain-side, down which they had come, and were about two hundred yards distant, when they halted to observe us more particularly. They consulted for a few minutes; those who had no muskets evidently disliking to come on, and endeavouring to persuade the others not to do so; which advice they, at last, allowed themselves to be guided by; more particularly when they found, upon a nearer inspection, that the booty they were likely to find upon a few peasants, would hardly repay the risk they would expose themselves to in acquiring it; so they wheeled about, and leisurely retraced their steps up the mountain. As we were not pressed for time, we remained where we were until they joined their comrades, and proceeded on their journey. Our honour being perfectly satisfied when we saw them re-commence their march; it was the signal

for us to do the same; and, among the turnings and windings of the ascent, we soon lost sight of the Carlists.

In the upper parts of this mountain, which is called Mont Melons,—and, excepting a small part, appertains to Andorre,—are some of the most savage scenes which can be imagined. There are three lakes, which are inclosed with perpendicular walls of rock, nearly two thousand feet high, their summits shattered and broken into all sorts of fantastic shapes.

This species of rock is often found in the Pyreneés, reaching to an enormous height, and forming a ridge or wall, terminating in so acute an angle, that I have frequently, in order to reach a good post when out izard shooting, or to obtain a view of some particular place, had to cross a ridge so narrow that I could look down the most terrific slopes of bare rock on both sides of me, and could only do so in safety by crawling upon my hands and knees, or, bestriding the acute summit, lift myself along it.

The walls which inclosed these lakes shot up even more slender and perpendicular than usual; and hence the appearance of ruin which they

presented. The storms of ages had torn and rent them into a thousand peaks and forms. I could have supposed, that the giant of the mountain, laughing at the structures of human hands, had, in derision, carved out his own ideas of architecture upon the walls of his lonely bath. These lakes were, indeed, three "gloomy Glendaloughs;"* not a tree, or shrub, or vestige of vegetation to be discovered near them; the very lichen seemed to shun the huge masses of rock,—the debris of the mountain,—that lay piled above each other in this wilderness, where reigned solitude the most profound, and silence, unbroken even by the dashing of a waterfall, or the rippling of a stream.

From this spot of ruin and desolation, we turned the flank of the mountain, and entered a little valley which belonged to Spain, the mountains which inclosed it belonging to Andorre. We could not, however, without making a considerable circuit, avoid going through it. Descending into this valley, we sprung a covey of

* Name of a lake in the mountains of Wexford, whose loneliness is the theme of one of Moore's melodies.

partridges, and my walking-staff came instinctively to my shoulder; the birds, little accustomed to the sight of human beings, did not take a long flight, and were marked down a few hundred yards off. I could not resist having a shot at them, especially as I found that there were some of the party who had small shot with them. Carlists were therefore, for the time, forgotten; and I drew the balls from two of the muskets, and, charging them with shot, followed the covey. I was able to spring the two old birds, both of which I shot, but the covey would not rise. After searching and beating about, we discovered several of them following the plan of the ostrich when he is hard pressed, with their heads poked into holes in the ground, or under stones: they were the grey-legged partridge, and were by no means unacceptable, considering the bad fare we were, in all probability, to partake of in Andorre.

Having crossed this little patch of Spanish soil, and another ridge of Andorre, we were at the head of one of the three large valleys which, with their dependent lateral ones, their gorges and ravines, constitute the territory of Andorre.

The stream which runs through this valley of Escaldos, is famous for the quantity and quality of its trouts.

The first native of Andorre whom we met with was a piscator upon this river, and it was with no small interest that I walked towards this freeman of the mountains. I accosted him in French, with the usual "What sport?"—but a shake of his head intimated that he did not understand me. Etienne spoke to him in Catalan, the language in use among these people, and asked him the same question; when he pulled off,—not his basket, but—his bonnet; and from its long bag emptied out about a score of fine-looking trouts.

His ideas, his thoughts, and his hopes were evidently of the most simple nature; so were his clothes, so was his fishing-tackle; every thing about him was *in keeping*. He was about the middle-size, well-made, and athletic; his features were good, and his countenance did not want expression; while his head might have served as a model to the phrenologist, of every thing that was great and good.

* * * * * *

But this is no place for a philosophical digression upon the uncultivated rudiments of understanding which this Andorrian piscator possessed; and who, although he might, perchance, be—

"Some mute, inglorious Milton"—

was after all, perhaps, happier within his limited sphere of intellectual enjoyments than thousands of the savans whose knowledge and fame have "set the world on fire." He was a labourer in the forge of Escaldos, and had been sent out by the manager to take him some trouts for supper. He would not partake of any of the food which we had with us; it was Friday, and a piece of bread was all that I could get him to accept.

This valley, one of the largest of Andorre, I found to consist of a succession of basins, formed by the mountains alternately closing and receding from each other. The basin in which is situated the forge of Escaldos, is almost shut out from those above and below it, the mountains closing at its extremities, and the river tumbling over a beautiful cascade, both at its entrance into it, and at its exit. We soon arrived at the forge of Escaldos, where we had resolved to remain during the night.

CHAPTER VI.

An Andorrian Forge—Exquisite Scenery of the Valley—Infancy of the Arts in Andorre—Village of Escaldos, and its Appearance—Anxiety of the Inhabitants regarding the Movements of the Carlists, and the Cause—Independence of the Republicans——Invited to dine with the Maire—Interior of the Houses—Appearance of the Women—A Republican Assembly, and patriotic Speech—Dinner at the Mairie—An Andorrian Ball—The Consequences of a Stumble.

THE establishment at Escaldos consisted of the shed in which was the forge, and one or two other buildings, in which the master and his labourers resided; it belongs to the commune of Andorre, and is managed by a Spaniard from Urgel. The forge was à la Catalan, and of the simplest and most rude construction; every thing about it seemed coeval with the epoch when the

properties of the mineral were first discovered. How the workmen of the Carron, or other great iron-works, would have stared had they seen the apparatus which wrought the iron at Escaldos! There was a very powerful fall of water, sufficient to have driven a hammer ten times the size of the one used, and to have made all the iron which they turned out of the forge in six months in the course of a week; but it was wasted, and thrown away, upon a wheel not very much larger or more powerful than some which I have seen employed at home to churn with. The axle was an unshapen pine, rude as it was felled upon the mountain, and into which short pieces of plank were stuck, as into the wheel of a child's windmill. From the character of this, the *moving* power, the simple nature of the interior may be supposed. The mineral is not found in the commune, but brought from the mountains at the head of the valley of Carol, so that it has to be carried nearly a day's journey to the forge; the charcoal is procured in the vicinity. The quantity of iron made with such apparatus was necessarily very small, enough to cover the expenses, and afford a livelihood to a certain number of the

inhabitants of the valley; and, as they did not seek for wealth, it was sufficient. The master was very complaisant, and, with his trouts and our partridges, we fared luxuriously. He volunteered me a share of his bed, the only thing of the kind in the place, but I preferred sleeping upon a bundle of skins upon the floor to accepting his offer. A considerable quantity of hides were brought into France from Spain by this valley. The Spaniards who came to take the wrought iron bringing the hides to the forge, the mules which brought the ore from Carol carrying them into France. Even when I was there, there was a considerable stock as it were in bond.

The bundles of skins did not form quite so pleasant a couch as if it had been composed of heath or rushes; but, nevertheless, it answered the purpose remarkably well; for, I slept soundly until the forge-hammer, beating within a few feet of my head, awoke me. A pedestrian's toilet does not, in general, occupy very much time, especially when all the minutiæ for performing it are fifty miles distant. So it was with me upon this, and many other occasions; but, with a clear mountain-stream in which to bathe and refresh

myself, I should have been discontented, indeed, not to have been satisfied. A well-arranged dressing-room, and its numerous comforts, I confess, is a great and almost indispensable luxury; but, what an enjoyment would be added, were they all so situated that their owners could, during the hot days of summer, and after having got through that most disagreeable of all disagreeable operations—shaving, throw down his instrument of torture, and plunging himself in the cool waters of a shady pool, forget its miseries!

We were soon upon our way down the valley, which became more and more beautiful and interesting every step that we advanced. The succession of basins to which I have alluded were passed through, having latterly acquired all the additional charms which their forests of pines conferred upon them; but the mountain-gates which inclosed these basins became gradually wider and wider, until they receded altogether; and, standing upon the edge of the first of a series of falls and rapids, which, in a more civilized part of the world, would have been visited by thousands, I saw stretched beneath me the most considerable of the valleys of Andorre; and, at

its extremity, the rich alluvial basin, containing the largest and most populous villages of the republic. The mountains upon each side of it were clothed with wood, from their base almost to their summits, the more delicate species of trees affecting the lower and sheltered situations, while the fir and the pine, spreading their gaunt arms and green boughs to the blast, reigned in undisputed possession of the loftier regions. The woods upon both sides ran down to the river's edge; and, from where I stood, so completely surrounded the many hamlets and cottages which were embosomed among them, that their situations were most frequently discovered by the smoke which curled above the trees. Here and there, on either side, was to be seen an open space among the forests, where the yellow of the grain contrasted strongly with the sombre hue of the pine. These spots were generally little shelves, valuable from the quantity and richness of the soil which the rains had deposited upon them. There the trees had been cleared away, the rude hut erected, and a family's wants provided for. The Andorrians might well be envied the possession of this valley, and its appurte-

nances; it was not very large, but it was a gem rich in all the elements of the most perfect scenery. On its richer soils waved the yellow grain, and flourished the tobacco-plant; its rivers had their cataracts, and their thousand rapids; while its noble mountains, rearing their bald heads and rocky summits six thousand feet above the villages on its bosom, could boast their dark forests which spread around them, and creeping up their heights where they struggled with the colds and storms, as if to shelter the soil which gave them birth.

The cottages, or rather huts, in which the peasantry live, are of the most original and simple construction. They are built either of stone or wood, but bearing very little in their appearance to denote that the mason or the carpenter had been employed in raising them. There was one circumstance connected with these buildings which displayed, more than any other, the infancy of the arts among the Andorrians; all the huts are covered with slates, of which there is no lack among the neighbouring mountains; but so little have the people profited by

their ability to make iron, that the slates of their houses are laid upon the rafters, and kept in their places by heavy pieces of stone being placed over them. It is only in the superior houses that nails are employed in fastening on the slates; so that the roofs of the houses, in general, present rather a singular appearance, as if an avalanche from the mountain had rained a quantity of debris upon them. The Andorrians, for centuries, have been forgers of iron, very large quantities of which they yearly supply to their Spanish neighbours, and yet they have so little benefited by the staple production of their country as not even to possess a few nails.

Around, or in the vicinity of the cottages, there is invariably a patch of the best soil devoted to the culture of the tobacco-plant; for here there are no such restrictions against its growth as in France, and each peasant can comfort himself in the winter with his pipe or his cigars. So rapid is the descent into the plain, that when I turned upon the little wooden-bridge, and looked up the valley towards the Forge which I had lately left, the torrent, where it could be seen among the

openings of the woods which overhung it, seemed as if it shot from the extreme heights to the bridge in one continued fall.

About three hours from the time we left the forge, we reached Escaldos, the first of the villages which are situated in the basin of Andorre. It was, without exception, the very dirtiest village in which I had ever been, consisting of, perhaps, a hundred houses as irregularly built, and as irregularly jumbled together. as the most ardent admirer of the picturesque in architecture could desire: they were generally of two stories; the mules, cattle, goats, and firewood occupying the under one, while the family were quartered in the upper. The lanes or passages between the houses were so narrow, that from the balcony which each building was dignified with, it would have been no difficult matter for a family to have visited their opposite neighbours without troubling themselves with descending into the street. Through a labyrinth of these dingy and odoriferous lanes, we found our way to the best Posada of the place, the comforts of which were quite compatible with the character of the village. As usual, the under

story was allotted to the bestial portion of the establishment, and any chance guests of the same fraternity; a winding wooden stair in the far corner of this stable, cow-shed, piggery, hen-house, wine-cellar, &c., &c., into which there came no streak of light but that which was admitted by the door, conducted to the upper regions of this house of entertainment. The second story was divided into sections; one of which served the joint purposes of kitchen and coffee-room, the other as a sleeping apartment for the guests.

We had not breakfasted, and our morning's walk had by no means blunted our appetite. The coarse brown bread of the country, eggs, and chocolate, were the provisions which the hostess could give us; such as they were there was no scarcity, and we could not say, that we fared indifferently. There are no vineyards in Andorre; consequently the wine, which the peasants are seldom without, is brought either from Spain or France, in small barrels or skins, by the muleteers who bring the mineral to the forges, or who come for the iron when made.

The villagers were in great anxiety as to the

proceedings of the Carlists, and we were very soon surrounded by numbers, and interrogated upon the subject. Excepting the party whom we had seen upon the mountains, we could give them no information, but we learnt from them a circumstance which perfectly accounted for the perturbation in which they were. It appeared that four Carlist officers had taken refuge in Urdino, one of the villages of the republic, where, from the neutrality of Andorre, they ought to have been perfectly safe. The Christinos had, however, disregarded the neutrality of the republic, broke into the village, and murdered the Carlist officers. The consequence of this act of brutality upon the part of the Christinos, was to cause the Carlists to revenge themselves upon the Andorrians, who, they said, ought to have protected their officers, and not suffered the Christinos to offer such an insult to their territory. Accordingly, a strong party of Carlists had, the preceding day, burnt one of the upper villages belonging to Andorre, and carried off whatever they could take along with them. Thus, between the two parties, the Andorrians were rather awkwardly situated. This burning of their village

had, however, roused the independent spirit of the republicans, and they were adopting means to repel and punish any future aggression.

Amongst those who came to make inquiries at us, was the Maire of the village, an honest miller, and a friend of Etienne's, who insisted that we should come, and eat what dinner his "pauvre cabane" could afford us. Etienne and I promised that we would come to the Maire at three o'clock —a very fashionable hour for Escaldos, but there was public business to be transacted to-day, and private comfort being as nought compared with the public weal, the Maire must needs postpone his dinner hour two hours later than usual, in order to preside at an assembly of the community, where the precautionary measures which it had been judged necessary to adopt, were to be communicated to the inhabitants. Of course, I resolved to be present at this republican congress, and in order to do so, and afterwards dine with the Maire, I gave up my intention of quitting Escaldos that night. As the meeting was not to take place immediately, and Etienne wished to call upon some of his acquaintances in the village, I accompanied him, and had thus an opportunity

of visiting some twenty families in it. I found the interior of all the houses arranged in the same manner, and all equally filthy. The women were in general handsome, and, indeed, many of them but wanted the scrubbing-brush and soap to have rendered them beautiful. They are perfectly Spanish in appearance, and in general have the same coquettishness of manner peculiar to the Spanish peasant women, and are equally fond of a little flirtation and admiration; and their husbands and swains can frown as darkly and fiercely upon the attentions of a stranger as the Spaniards; but in Andorre the knife is not in such frequent use as in Spain, and the stranger may make a civil speech, or pay a pretty compliment to the Andorrian women, without much danger of having his gallantry repaid by an unexpected stab from the murderous weapon which a Spaniard is never without. The furniture of the houses consisted of one or two rude pine tables and stools, which from smoke and dirt had become so dark in colour as to resemble ebony, a few plates, a copper pan, and a few wooden spoons. The beds of the family were in niches in the sides of the apartment, and in gentility and

luxury corresponded with the other articles of the establishment. The interior of an Irish cabin—brats, pigs, poultry, jackass, and all, was infinitely preferable to the most cleanly of the houses which I visited in Escaldos.

By the time that Etienne and I had made our calls in the village, it was the hour of assembling at the Maire's. The council-hall upon this occasion, was the barn or granary attached to the mill, and was quite large enough to contain the greater part of the male population of the village. Business had commenced before we arrived, and the room was almost filled, but we found that our friend, the Maire, had not forgotten us, for he had reserved a couple of stools, out of the few which surrounded a little table at which he presided, for our especial use. Although this was not a regular council of the republic, at which the Syndic would have presided, it was still a curious and original assemblage of free-born and independent men; and novel and interesting from its being the first republican assembly I had ever been present at. Upon a three legged stool sat the president, a strong, well-built, and energetic looking personage; to all appearance, by no

means ill-adapted to be the chief of such a group as surrounded him. There might be about eighty individuals present; the younger part of whom stood in groups, while the elders were seated upon the sacks and skins which were scattered around.

The Maire had already furnished the assembly with the details of the incursions of both the Spanish parties; and impressed upon the meeting the urgent necessity of preserving the independence of the republic, by adopting measures calculated to secure to it the respect to which it was entitled, and repel and punish the violation of their territories. He then called their attention to the means which were requisite to effect this object. They were—that the law requiring each member of the community to have in his possession a musket, and a certain quantity of powder and shot, should be rigidly attended to: that a certain proportion of the inhabitants should remain constantly in the villages, for their protection, while the remainder were engaged in, or absent upon, their various employments: that all possible means should be taken for the purpose of obtaining the earliest information of the vicinity

of their enemies: and that, for this purpose, all the peasants living in the upper valleys, and the shepherds with the cattle upon the mountains, should receive instructions to bring immediate intelligence to the various communes, of the approach of strangers: and that, upon the receipt of such intelligence, every man, who was not disabled by age or illness, should assemble in the villages, and act according to the advice of the appointed anthorities. These were the sum total of the Andorrian Militia regulations; and every man of the republic being interested in its safety, were sure of being adhered to.

The Maire, having delivered these instructions to the assembly, intimated, that if any individual had aught to say, any precautions to recommend, that he would be most happy to hear them.

Upon this, one of the elders of the assembly stepped forward to the table, and with much eloquence and apparent feeling, harangued the meeting. Excepting where certain words which I knew, conveyed to me the meaning of a few sentences, I could not understand, nor sufficiently appreciate, the merits of the orator and patriot; but the substance of his speech, as Etienne after-

wards told me, was to the effect, that he was confident that every man among them would enthusiastically respond to the call which their country's danger had induced its magistrates to make upon them; and that, from whatever quarter it was threatened, and by whatever numbers, that those men who had been born in Andorre, who were descended from sires who by their noble conduct had acquired, and by their bravery had defended, the rights and freedom which were now the boast of their country, would not permit their inheritance to be destroyed, but, unblemished and unspotted, bequeath it to their children. He also stated, that he, and others present, could recollect the period, and a long period it was, when they were even in greater danger than at present; when there was far more cause to dread the subversion of their government, and its degradation into a province of one of those powerful countries which were then at war with each other. That Andorre had, even then, preserved its independence, and repelled the aggressions which had been committed upon it; and that surely now, when they had only to protect themselves against the inroads of one of

the neighbouring nations, they could have no fear as to their ability to defend themselves. The patriot's address was received with all the applause which it merited, and the meeting broke up, without, as in England, having voted its thanks to the president, "for his able conduct in the chair."

From the council-hall, or barn, Etienne, myself, and the old gentleman, whose "voice was still for war," adjourned, with the Maire, to the sanctuary of his dining-room, kitchen, or bedroom, where we found the Lady Mayoress, her daughters, and sons, awaiting our presence. The apartment was, certainly, superior to any which I had entered in the village, for it contained chairs instead of stools; one of which had, actually, arms to it. The bed recesses had pieces of drapery hanging down before them; and there was a greater abundance of dishes. But, what at once gave dignity and character to the house, and, independent of all other considerations, would have fully justified the villagers of Escaldos in their choice of a Maire, was his being the owner of half a dozen pewter spoons, and a full dozen of knives and forks,— steel or iron, it does

not signify which,—with bone handles. No wonder the Mayoress was proud of them; they were the only articles of the kind in the village.

Dinner was soon announced by the hissing of the soup, as it was emptied into the wooden tureen, which was placed upon the centre of the long, narrow pine-table, which was covered with a clean, but greyish white table-cloth. There seemed to be no great ceremony as to the particular places which the guests were to occupy, so I resigned to Etienne what would, at home, have been the place of honour, and seated myself where I had most chance of making myself understood, between a couple of the Maire's daughters. I did this upon principle; for I have invariably found, that the females of any country whose language I either spoke indifferently, or hardly understood, were far more apt and intelligent in comprehending what I wished to say, than the men.

A spoon and a plate were set before each individual; and, all being seated, the Maire pulled the tureen towards him, helped himself, and pushed it round; the next person did the same; and so on. Then followed a large brown loaf, from which each person cut a pound, or more, of

bread. The soup was composed of vegetables and bread; and a piece of pork, which afterwards made its appearance, had been boiled in it. The soup was removed, and fowls, fish, and the piece of pork, succeeded. This constituted our dinner, and only wanted the few elegancies of civilized life, to have made it worthy of the table of the Lady Mayoress of any country town in France or England.

We drank our wine out of the odd-shaped bottles which I had first essayed the use of at Valmania; but I had now, from practice, become sufficiently expert as to be able to measure the distance from the "cup to the lip," and to describe the proper angle with the neck and spout of the bottle, so as to save myself from a recurrence of the mishap which followed my first attempt, and thus baulked my fair (dark, I should say) neighbours of the laugh which they would otherwise have raised at my expense, and which their compressed lips and smiling eyes plainly told me they were preparing for when I took the decanter in my hand. Having satisfied my thirst, I set it down upon the table, with an action and look explanatory of my satisfaction at having cheated some of the company of a laugh

at my awkwardness. Why should not Andorrian ladies have thought me equally as vulgar and ignorant of the common usages of civilized life, by my inability to handle their decanters, as my polished friends at home would have esteemed me had they seen me cut fish with a knife, or eat curry with any other instrument than a spoon? Lord Chesterfield himself might have been convicted of ill-breeding at the table of the Maire of Escaldos.

Anxious to see as much as possible of the manners and customs of the Andorrians, I made Etienne inquire as to the possibility of our assembling the villagers to a dance in the evening. The Maire sanctioned the proposal; the hall of state was to be the rendezvous, and the youngsters of the party started off to spread the news through the village, more welcome in their character than would have been the "fiery cross"* which in the morning they were told to be prepared for.

Shortly after seven, the whole dancing popula-

* In Scotland, in ancient times, the clans and inhabitants of the various glens and districts were summoned to attend upon

tion of the place were assembled in the council-hall, barn, or ball-room, dressed in their holiday suits; and I could observe that some of the ladies whose acquaintance I had formed in the morning, had evidently been laving their dark countenances in the stream, and justified the supposition, that there was more necessity for soap and water than for "Rowland's Kalydor," to purify their complexions. There was no scarcity of musicians, where almost every lad could jingle the strings of the guitar, or beat time with the triangle. The Andorrian dances are almost the same as those of the Arragonese, and other Spanish peasantry; but the women do not trip it so lightly as the Spanish women, and the men have not that ease and elegance displayed by the Spaniard in the performance of his native dances. The Andorrian dances, however, are not by any means deficient in spirit and activity, set after set succeeding each other without one moment's cessation; the instruments were only laid down by those who

their chiefs when in danger, by means of the Fiery Cross; a wooden cross half burnt, which the messengers sent to warn the people, carried along with them.

were going to dance, to be taken up by those who had finished; and so on it continued for several hours, both ladies and gentlemen occasionally invigorating themselves with a pull from the strange decanters; which, as patron of the ball, I took care to have well filled. About eleven Etienne and I retired, leaving the party in full glee, the Maire presiding over the remainder of the cask of wine, and encouraging the dancers with his voice as he beat time with his fists upon the barrel.

The night was exceedingly dark, and if we had not taken the precaution of stealing one of the lamps away from the ball-room, we might have experienced more difficulty in groping our way to our hotel, through the winding lanes of Escaldos, than in crossing the mountains to Carol; at least so said Etienne, as he tumbled over a heap of something or other, which, however soft to fall upon, did not render him a more agreeable companion; fortunately I was carrying the light, otherwise I should have perhaps had a summerset also; but no farther mischief befel us until we reached the door of the posada, when, in stepping over the cross-bar at the bottom, I

stumbled, and let fall the light. I mentioned, that the staircase which led to the upper story, was situated in one corner of this stable, but there was both difficulty and danger to be encountered before arriving at it. It was a place where in daylight it was most necessary to pick one's steps with care: of course this could not done in the dark, and the danger to be encountered was from the mules, who of all animals dislike being disturbed during night by strangers. Etienne went first, but he had hardly proceeded a couple of yards within the door, when a snort from one of the mules, accompanied by a lash out with its heels, made him retreat. Mules, like other obstinate animals of whatever genus, become better friends by bullying than coaxing, so Etienne, accustomed to their ways, did not spare the former, and keeping as close to the wall as possible, we reached the staircase in safety. We were in hopes that we should have been able to find another lamp in the room above, but the whole of the family had either retired to rest, or were still at the ball; the fire was out, and we were in perfect darkness. We had told the hostess, that we should occupy the spare apartment, and accord-

ingly we opened the door of it, with the intention of sleeping as we best could, upon the beds, if we could find them, or failing in our attempts to do that, to lie down upon the floor. Our intentions were, however, frustrated; for when we opened the door, such harmonious sounds proceeded from all parts of the chamber, that some dozen, at least, of intruders must have taken possession of our quarters. Alas! there was no bell to ring, no waiter to call up, and in true John Bull style indignantly order him to turn the sleeping gentlemen out. Here "might was right," and had Etienne and I tried the experiment, we would, in all probability, have been treated as intruders ourselves, and as such found a reception which might have proved somewhat more dangerous and fatal than the kicks from the mules below, had we received one from each of them. We thought, with the old adage, that it was best to "let sleeping dogs lie;" so we shut the door, and in revenge only drew the bolt upon them. Etienne laid himself down upon one of the benches in the kitchen; but, as I did not altogether relish the atmosphere of the apartment, composed of the exhalations arising from

the refuse of the frying-pan, the well-picked bones which were strewed about, the upsetting of the wine decanters, and various other pot-house effluvia, and as it was a fine night, I carried one of the three legged stools into the balcony at the window, and placing it in one corner, so as to make myself as comfortable as I could, I was soon afterwards sound asleep.

CHAPTER VIII.

Prudence of the preceding Night illustrated—A Scottish Answer to a searching Question—Departure of the Contrabandiers—Admonition of the Maire—An Andorrian Souvenir—Valley d'Arensal—Valley d'Urdino—The Crœsus of the Republic—Village of Urdino—Murder of Four Christino Officers—The largest Forge in Andorre—Extreme Poverty of the Villagers—Passage of the Mountains—Valley of Embalire—Fine Crops—Curious Church—Thunder Storm — Saldeou — An Andorrian Proprietor—Past and Present History of their Republic.

I SLEPT as soundly as I could have hoped to have done in the interior of the house, and only awoke when Etienne came to tell me, that the gentlemen who had taken possession of our apartment were endeavouring to get out. The bolt was of too slight a nature to have long resisted the violent shakings which they were bestowing

upon the door, otherwise we should have kept them shut up for some time; so I told him to let them out. Etienne demanded what was the cause of all the noise they were making (as if he did not know any thing about it); and, upon their answering that they were shut in, he withdrew the bar, and out marched four Spanish muleteers, Carlists, Christinos, or Contrabandiers,—one or other of them; or, perhaps, all, as the occasion might suit them; but, from their appearance, perfectly capable of enacting any of the characters; and, swearing vengeance upon the "cursed hogs" who had shut them up. One fellow in particular brandished his clasped knife, and "grinned a ghastly smile" as he showed how deep he would drive it into the body of the object of his revenge. Etienne, rather annoyed at the anger of the party, insinuated that the bolt might have slipped accidentally, and thus, probably, no one had fastened it. But, as I was aware that this excuse would not, upon an examination of the latch, be likely to "go down," and observing a well-filled decanter upon the table, I took it up, and drinking "success to their discovery of the rascals who had played

them the trick," took a draught of it, and handed it round. Understanding French, they all drank in their turns, and the row at once subsided.

Meanwhile, notwithstanding the uproar, not one of the household had made their appearance, so I proposed that Etienne should beat up the quarters of the hostess, have our breakfast prepared, and that the Spaniards should partake of it along with us. I had not decided which route I should take to reach Ax in Arriege; but the conversation which I had with these Spaniards, at once determined me. Without seeming to be inquisitive, I discovered that they were on their way to the same place, and that their route lay through the Valley d'Embalire by Canillo. Now, although I wished to visit Canillo, one of the largest of the villages of Andorre, still as we should have, most probably, to sleep, either in some cabin or shed, or, perhaps, under a tree, I had no desire to do so in company with my new acquaintances, even although they had been of less doubtful characters than they seemed to be. Accordingly, when they questioned me as to my proceedings, I affected an indifference as to my movements—"I might go one way; I

might go another: in short, I was perfectly undecided." Thus, after breakfast, we parted very good friends; they, without the slightest knowledge as to our plans, whilst we knew as much of theirs as we wished.

After they were gone, I consulted with Etienne regarding our proceedings, and the propriety of choosing a route different from that taken by the Spaniards. Escaldos is situated at the extremity of the basin of Andorre, the Val d' Embalire debouches into the valley which I had passed through the preceding day, about a mile above the village; the Val d' Arensal debouches into the basin a little below it. Through both of these valleys there is a path, which, through the mountains at the head of the valley, leads into Arriege. We chose the path through the Val d' Arensal by Urdino, the more circuitous of the two, but that was of little consequence to us. En passant, we called upon the Maire, to bid him good bye, and found him, notwithstanding his jollity of the preceding night, already out of bed, and superintending the turnings of his mill wheel. He wished us to have remained another day with him, and to have had another dance,

but this would not have suited our arrangements, and we declined. We told him the trick we had played off upon the Spaniards, and he expressed great satisfaction that we had not accompanied them over the mountains, "For," said the Maire, "I know the party very well, they are the most daring contrabandiers upon the frontier; they know the passes through the mountains too well ever to be entrapped by the douaniers; we have reason to suppose that they were of the party who burnt our village the other day, and they are such desperados, that they would think no more of murdering me, were it for their interest to do so, than they would to shoot my dog. I know contrabandiers with whom I would trust all I possess, and who would not injure any one, except in the way of their profession; but as for the 'mauvais sujets' who passed my door just now, I would be well pleased were it the last time they did so." I thanked him for his kindness, and we parted.

The only shop in the village was kept by a Frenchman; it was a sort of general warehouse; provisions, hardware, and silks adorned its various shelves. I could not resist the temptation which

its gay window presented, to carry off some souvenir of Escaldos, so I stepped into the shop to make a choice, but this was no easy matter. Monsieur asked me what I wished to purchase, I told him that I did not know exactly what I wanted, but that I wished to have something that could be easily carried, as I was going into France. Monsieur gave an interpretation to my speech which I had not the slightest intention of conveying, for, thinking what I said was a hint to give me some contraband articles of easy carriage, he instantly retreated to his back shop, and presently returned bearing a large package of Barcelona handkerchiefs and shawls. Such articles were, however, better suited to my purpose than salt meat, pots and pans, jugs and decanters, and having tumbled them about in a style which would not have evinced any want of fashionable nonchalance upon the part of a portion of my country-women whose daily occupation it is to derange the packages which the shopkeepers of the metropolis have spent so many hours of the preceding night in arranging, I bargained for and bought one of the particoloured shawls. Spanish silks are not admitted into France, but Etienne said, that

we should have no difficulty with the douaniers, so I gave it in charge to him. Crossing the bridge over the little river, the scenery at whose source and along whose banks had given me such delight the preceding day, we skirted along the north side of the basin by a narrow path among woods of the walnut and wild apple-trees.

The entrance to the Val d' Arènsal from the basin of Andorre, is by one of those beautiful and magnificent gorges so frequently met with in the Pyreneés. Those who are acquainted with the path from Luz to Gavarnie may form an idea of it. The defile of Urdino is as narrow, the mountains, which darken and frown over it, as steep, and as draped with brushwood, while the torrent rages as furiously as it thunders through its narrow channel, and the scenery altogether bears a strong resemblance to that in the vicinity of the Pas d' Echelle in the valley of Gavarnie.

Near the entrance to the defile, upon a little mound, is a curious old sculptured cross, so antique that I could neither decipher the carving nor the inscriptions; and in a nook where the path winds round one of the jutting out rocks in the

gorge, there is a small chapel, the greater part of which has been hewn out of the rock, and is greatly resorted to by the inhabitants. About a couple of miles beyond the chapel the scenery of the path is unexpectedly changed; the gorge is quitted for a valley, wide and open, containing meadows, pastures, and corn fields. The mountains which inclose it are wooded and cultivated, and hamlets and villages with their church belfries overtopping them, are distinguished upon their sides. Etienne pointed out to me a village upon the mountain side, where the finest walnuts either in France or Spain (he said) were produced; whether or not this is the case I cannot tell, but I can bear testimony to the beauty of the situation of the village, and the magnificence of the walnut-trees which surrounded it.

There are two of the most considerable forges of Andorre in this district. One takes the name of the valley; the other is called Urdino, and is situated in a lateral valley of the same name which opens into the Val d' Arensal. The forge in the Val d' Arensal is the property of one individual, as is that of Urdino. Had I wished to have crossed the frontier in the direction of

Aussat and Vicdessos, I would have traced the Val d' Arensal to its source, and entered the Arriege by the Port d' Aussat, but as I preferred the route by the Port de Framiquel, and the Hospitalet to Ax, it was necessary to quit the Val d' Arensal, and striking into the Val d' Urdino, to cross the mountains which separated it from the Val d' Embalire, and tracing that valley to its source, pass the ridge which separated it from the source of the valley of Ax. By adopting this route I should have an opportunity of visiting all the valleys and villages of Andorre. We, therefore, quitted the Val d' Arensal, and entered that of Urdino. This is one of the richest and most fertile of the lesser valleys of Andorre; and the greater part of it, including the forge, belongs to one proprietor, who consequently is the wealthiest individual of the republic. I inquired of an Andorrian, what might be the amount of yearly income enjoyed by this great man; and the answer, which I received in French, conveyed most perfectly the benefit which a person unacquainted with the luxuries of life, supposed the possession of a large income conferred on its possessor: "Il a quatre vingt francs

a manger chaque jour." This would give an income of a thousand a year, or perhaps one fifth of the whole revenue of Andorre. I endeavoured to ascertain how this individual came to acquire such large possessions, but I could not discover any thing farther than that his family had held them for a long period.

Urdino is a considerable village, the inhabitants of which, having little property of their own, necessarily depend upon the "great man" of the place for employment. The forge employs, for six months of the year, a great proportion; the remainder are engaged in cultivating the land, or tending the flocks. Urdino was the village in which the four Carlist officers had been murdered by a party of the Christinos three days before I reached it. They had, however, confined themselves to the slaughter of the officers; and had done no injury to the inhabitants of the place.

The forge is very much larger than the others of Andorre; and, although the machinery connected with it is but of very simple construction, still, the great advantage of capital is apparent in all its arrangements. Most of the other forges in

the mountains are stopped working as soon as the weather, breaking up, prevents the mules' bringing the mineral over the mountains, or the charcoal from the forests; but, at Urdino, there is always a large supply of both ore and charcoal, far beyond what is necessary for the immediate consumption; so that, when all the forges of the country are at a stand, the forge of Urdino is giving employment to many individuals, and is profitable to its proprietor. Having examined the interior of the forge, we went into the posada of the village, to replenish our wine-skins before ascending the mountains. The price of the wine amounted to two francs and a half, and I handed the hostess a five franc piece in payment. She had, however, no change to give me; and she went out to borrow it from her neighbours. She was some time in returning; and, upon Etienne's interrogating her concerning the cause of the delay, it appeared that it arose from the difficulty of collecting the two francs and a half in the village; and it had been only after borrowing a few sous from many different individuals that the sum was made up. From this great scarcity of money, I inferred that the "great man" paid his

labourers in "kind." The house in which the gentleman lived was a large, square, and ugly-looking building in one of the dirty lanes of the village; and I could not help being astonished, that the owner of so many beautiful sites for a *place* as this valley offered, should have preferred being surrounded by the dirty hovels of the village. One cause of his living in the village might arise from the great difficulty which, in many winters, he would have experienced in reaching his forge, by reason of the snow storms, even although he resided but a very short distance from it.

If I had come into Andorre by the route by which I was quitting it, I should have brought an introductory letter to this wealthy Andorrian from some of his friends at Ax, which would have been of great service to me in enabling me to become better acquainted with the customs and traditions of the country. Should I ever revisit Andorre, I shall not forget to do so; meantime, should any of my readers think of going thither, I should earnestly recommend them to carry along with them an introduction to the Proprietor of Urdino. To those who do not relish sleeping in

the open air, or living upon chocolate and eggs, it will insure a bed, and a greater choice of provisions.

The mountains in the vicinity of Urdino produce a sufficient quantity of charcoal to supply the forge; but the mineral, as at Escaldos and other places, is brought from the mountains of Carol; a distance which it takes the mules eight or ten hours to perform. The ascent of the Col d'Urdino is very steep; and, for a long way up the mountains, we scrambled through forests of fir and pine. I observed here, as in the more civilized parts of the French Pyrenees, the great havoc and waste which the ignorant charbonniers and woodcutters make in cutting down the wood. Their implements are, in general, of such a simple nature, that they can only cut through a certain thickness; consequently, all of the trees which exceed in diameter the powers of the workmen, are cut over at some distance from the ground, and the best and soundest part of the tree left to decay. In the mountains of Eaux Chandes, and the Basque country, I have seen the finest timber ruined in this manner, where there could be no excuse for such negligence, as the forests were

government property, and the wood applied to public purposes: and the French government could not plead their poverty as a reason why they could not supply their workmen with the few tools which were requisite for them. The trunks of the largest trees are not so easily converted into charcoal as the lesser ones; the Andorrian charbonnier, therefore, when he wants to destroy a large tree for the sake of its branches, and cannot cut it down, sets fire to the trunk, and consuming the support, the branches are obtained. The scene which an oak forest presents, when it has been cut down for the sake of the bark, with its blanched trunks and boughs scattered around,—and which some author has compared to a field of battle after the slain have been stripped of their clothing,—is a melancholy object, and can only be equalled by the desolate appearance of a wood which has been destroyed by fire. In the French Pyreneés, so careless were the inhabitants of preserving their forests, that it was by no means an uncommon circumstance for a peasant, when he wanted a pair of sabots, to cut down a couple of trees, and carve a shoe out of each. Government has latterly, however, paid more

attention to the forests, and been more careful of their preservation; but, both government and people are still very, very far from possessing any practical knowledge of arboriculture; or, if they do, it is never applied.

From Urdino to Canillo, the pedestrian will find it a toilsome stage; but the beauty and aspect of the mountains will encourage him on his journey. We spent several hours in crossing the ridge of mountains which separates those two villages. The mountains upon the Canillo side of the ridge are covered with the finest pasture, as beautiful as that upon the Ochills;* and the valley of Embalire at their feet produced as fine crops of grain as I ever beheld. The barley, especially, was of a nature to delight the heart of the most capricious farmer. In straw, size of the grain, quality and quantity, it far excelled the best British barley, and I regretted most exceedingly, the loss of a sample which I intended to have brought home.

The village of Canillo is of the same dirty character as the others of Andorre. The Syndic, or chief magistrate of the Republic, is a native of

* A range of mountains in the vale of the Devon, in Clackmananshire.

it. It has a curious old church, which is worth examining, from the simple and truly original character of the structure. I could have supposed some guilty sinner, ignorant of the first rules of masonry, had been condemned to expiate his sins by building a holy edifice; and that the church of Canillo had been the production of his unpractised hands. I did not inquire to what saint the edifice had been dedicated; but I am afraid that many of the holy fathers of the calendar, who have had some of the finest specimens of architecture in the world dedicated to them, would have been ashamed to have had this building associated with their memory.

There was nothing to induce me to remain in Canillo; so we proceeded along the banks of the river which runs through it, with the intention of sleeping at the Hospitalet, the first French village across the frontier; this could only be accomplished by our walking during a part of the night. About four o'clock, we arrived at Saldeon, an Andorrian hamlet of this valley. We had not reached the shelter which this place afforded us, ere a thunderstorm, which we had hoped would have passed along the higher range of the mountains, burst over our heads, and the rain de-

scended in torrents. Many a wistful look did I cast towards the head of the valley during the first hour of the rain, in the hopes of seeing it clear away, and permit us to resume our journey. But it showed no symptoms of abating its violence; and, as an hour or two was of consequence to us, it soon became so late as to banish all thoughts of our quitting our present shelter, even were the storm to cease: so we set about foraging for provisions, and discovering where and how we were to pass the night.

The hamlet of Saldeon consists of two or three miserable hovels, that in which we had taken refuge being the best of the number. The proprietor was from home; but his wife, and an idiot old woman, who was taking charge of the youngest of ten children, were the inmates of the cabin. It consisted of one apartment, divided into two or three sections by rough wooden boarding, in the largest of which we crouched over the embers of a fire, in order to dry our clothes, partially wet by the shower which had been the prelude to the storm which now raged without. We soon procured more wood, and made the fire blaze so high as to overcome the

light which was admitted through a single pane of glass; and, hanging our coats as near the chimney as possible, it was not long before they were thoroughly dried. We could not expect to fare sumptuously in such quarters; indeed, I was almost afraid to ask the lady of the house if she could give us any thing to eat, as I was afraid that she would have answered in the negative; but where is the cabin, however poor its owners may be, which cannot boast its couple or two of fowls? The hovel at Saldeon had its *domestic* fowls, and, fortunately for us, there was no scarcity of eggs in the house. The bread was so sour as to be scarcely eatable; but, by boiling several eggs and a quantity of the bread together, I made a kind of soup which a hungry traveller could relish sufficiently well. Etienne and the other guides followed my example; and we dined and supped, satisfied, at least, that we might have fared worse.

While eating our meal, another stormstaid traveller entered the cabin. He was an Andorrian, and proprietor of some quantity of land in one of the communes. I offered him a share of the soup which I had cooked, which he very

thankfully accepted; and, throwing off his capote, or cloak, took a seat near me. He had received a better education than most of his countrymen, and could speak French perfectly. The circumstance of meeting with such an Andorrian I considered as very fortunate; and was, at once, reconciled and indifferent to the storm, and thought not of the comfortable quarters which, but for it, I should have had at the Hospitalet. I had now an opportunity which had not hitherto presented itself of acquiring a perfect knowledge of the constitution and character of the people among whom I was; and I lost no time in profiting by it. Question after question I put to my neighbour; and he was most civil and kind in giving me the information which I wished to procure. I shall here give an account of the little Republic of Andorre, compiled from the information which this native gave me, and from other authentic sources.

The Republic of Andorre, situated upon the southern side of the Pyreneés, and beyond the natural frontier of France, ought from its physical position to belong to Spain. It is, however, considered as a neutral and independent province,

although it is to a certain extent connected with both countries; to Spain by its religious, to France, by its civil government. The history of this little country presents a phenomenon well worthy the attention and study of the naturalist and the politician. It affords the almost solitary instance of a people, few in number, and, in comparison with their powerful neighbours, almost incapable of defence, having preserved during twelve centuries their independence and their institutions uninjured by the many revolutions which have so frequently convulsed the two great kingdoms which surround it. The contented and unambitious minds of its inhabitants, with their seclusion from the world, and indifference to or ignorance of the political intrigues and commotions which have overthrown and subverted its many states, has for such a length of time secured to them, as the feudatory republic of France, more real and substantial liberty, than was ever enjoyed under the purest of the Italian republics.

Andorre is composed of three mountain vallies; of the basin formed by the union of those vallies, and its embouchere, which stretches towards the Spanish Urgel. Its valleys are the wildest and

most picturesque in the Pyreneés, and the mountains, with their immense peaks, which inclose it, amongst the highest, and most inaccessible. Its length from north to south may be six and thirty miles; from east to west, thirty. It is bounded on the north by Arriege; on the south by the district of Urgel; on the west by the valley of Paillas; and on the east by that of Carol. It contains six communes; Andorre, the chief town, Canillo, Enchamp, La Massane, Urdino, Saint Julien, and above thirty villages or hamlets.

The government is composed of a council of twenty-four; each commune electing four members, who are chosen for life. The council elect a Syndic, who convokes the assemblies, and takes the charge of public affairs. He enjoys great authority, and when the assemblies are not sitting, he has the complete government of the community.

It is to Charlemagne that Andorre owes its independence. In 790, that prince having marched against the Moors of Spain, and defeated them in the neighbouring valley of Carol, the Andorrians (following the tradition of the country, the only, but in a state like this the

best authority to rely upon), rendered themselves so useful to the French army, supplying them with provisions, and taking care of their wounded, that the emperor, to recompense them for their kindness, made them independent of the neighbouring princes, delivered them from the Moors, and permitted them to be governed by their own laws. After him, Louis le Debonnaire, whom the Andorrians style the pious, having driven the Moors across the Ebro, ceded to Lisebus, the Bishop of Urgel, a part of the rights over Andorre which Charlemagne had reserved to himself and his successors. It was in virtue of this grant that the bishop of Urgel acquired a right to a part of the tithes of the six parishes, and still exercises a spiritual jurisdiction over the country. This is the only manner in which it has any dependence upon Spain.

Afterwards the Counts of Foix exercised in Andorre the rights of the crown of France, in the name of their sovereign, but more frequently upon their own account. Since Henry the Fourth, the kings of France have maintained their rights according to the usages established by the Counts of Foix. In 1793, these rights, being considered

as feudal, were abandoned, and Andorre was for a time completely separated from France; but notwithstanding this temporary independence, the Andorrians continued to preserve their attachment to that country. The inhabitants courageously resisted the violation of their territory by the Spaniards, and furnished to the French armies, during the late war, both guides and assistance of every kind. At the same time they anxiously solicited the establishment of the ancient order of things, and Napoleon yielded to their wish by a decree of the 20th of March, 1806. By this decree Andorre continued to be a republic connected with France; its Viguier, or criminal judge, being a Frenchman chosen from the department of Arriege; and paying an annual sum of 960 francs, for which he was to enjoy the privilege of receiving various articles of commerce free of duty from France. Thus, excepting as regards the spiritual jurisdiction of the Bishop of Urgel, which after all cannot be said to interfere with its independence any more than the Pope's ecclesiastical authority over Catholic countries can with theirs, Andorre is altogether independent of Spain; and as regards France, the annual

payment it makes to that country is only in lieu of certain privileges which it enjoys from it, while there being so little crime in Andorre, the appointment of the French judge has been more with a view to deter criminals of that country from taking refuge in the neutral province, than for the punishment of its natives. Andorre may therefore be justly considered as the oldest free republic in existence. The population is from seven to eight thousand, quite great enough for the resources of the country. The Andorrians are all of the church of Rome, and very religious. The members of their clergy are in general natives, and they, and the more wealthy of the inhabitants, receive their education at Toulouse or Barcelona. Each curé, in addition to his pastoral duties, has the charge of a school, where the poor are instructed gratuitously, but this does not give him much extra trouble, few of the peasants thinking it at all necessary to send their children to school to acquire what, in their land of shepherds and labourers, they imagine can be of little consequence to them in their future lives; this erroneous impression is the cause why few of the natives have more learning than is sufficient

to enable them to read and write, and the great majority are in total ignorance of even these first principles.

The Andorrians are simple and severe in their manners, and the vices and corruptions of cities have not hitherto found their way into their valleys, still, in comparison with the rest of the world, the abode of virtue and content. The inhabitants live as their forefathers lived a thousand years before them, and the little they know concerning the luxuries, the arts, and the civilization of other countries, inspiring them rather with fear than envy. Their wealth consists in the number of sheep or cattle they possess, or the share they may have in the iron forges, only a very few of their number being the proprietors of any extent of land beyond the little garden which surrounds their cottage. Each family acknowledges a chief, who succeeds by right of primogeniture. These chiefs, or eldest sons, choose their wives from families of equal consideration with their own, reprobating mes-alliances, and looking little to fortune, which besides is always very small upon both sides. The eldest sons have, even during the lives of their parents, a certain

status, being considered as the representatives of their ancestors; they never leave the paternal roof until they marry, and if they marry an heiress they join her name to their own; and unless married, they are not admitted to a charge of public affairs.

When there are only daughters in a family, the eldest, who is an heiress, and succeeds as an eldest son would do, is always married to a cadet of another, who adopts her name, and is domiciliated in her family; and by this arrangement, the principal Andorrian houses have continued for centuries without any change in their fortunes, ni plus riche—ni plus pauvre. They are married by their priests, after having had their bans, as in Scotland, proclaimed in their parish church for three successive Sundays. The poorest of the inhabitants are in Andorre not so badly off as in other countries, their wants are few and easily supplied, the opulent families taking care of those who are not; and they in gratitude, honour and respect their benefactors.

The Andorrians are in general strong and well proportioned; the greater part of the diseases proceeding from the moral affections are unknown,

as well as those from vice and corruption. The costume of the men is simply composed of the coarse brown cloth made from the wool of their own sheep; it resembles that worn by the peasants of Bigorre, with this difference, that the Andorrians wear the flowing red cap of the Catalans: the women dress exactly as the Catalan women do; they are not admitted to any of the assemblies where public affairs are considered; nay, so little has the wisdom of the sage Andorrians coincided with that of the British parliament, expressed upon a late occasion, that the ladies are not even allowed to assist at the masses which are performed upon the reception of the bishop, or the judge. Crime of every kind is very rare, and the punishments awarded to culprits are, although mild, sufficiently effectual. There are no law-suits relative to paternal successions; and should disputes of any kind arise, they are at once referred to the Syndic, whose decision is never controverted. All the males are liable to serve as militia, should they be required, and every head of a family is obliged to have in his possession at all times a musket and a certain quantity of powder and balls.

Commerce of every kind is free in Andorre, but as its industry is only employed in the manufacture of the most indispensable articles, and these are of the most indifferent nature ; it has little to exchange for the produce of other countries, excepting its iron, the whole of which is sold to Spain, the high duties prohibiting its entrance into France. The republic is not without its arms, which are those of Bearn, quartered with those of Foix.

CHAPTER VIII.

Unlooked for and unwelcome Arrival—Council of War—An Adventure—Departure from Saldeon—Carlist Robbery—Passage over the Mountains—Arriege—Mines of the Pyrenées—Wild Flowers—A tedious Law-suit—Village of the Hospitalet—A young Bride—Conversation with a Merchant of Carol—Specimen of French Legislation—Commercial Policy of Great Britain and France.

THE storm continued to rage with unabated violence, drowning with its noise the squalling of the children, and the low unpleasant wailing of the idiot old woman, who had kept up a constant croaking and chattering to herself ever since we had entered the hovel, evidently dissatisfied with the intrusion. The children soon fell asleep; but the dismal croaking of the old

woman continuing after the fury of the storm had passed, I could not think of sleeping within ear-shot of it; so I resolved to seek some out-house in which to lie down. I proposed this to Etienne, who went out to look if there was such a place to be found. He had hardly gone, when the door was opened, and our old acquaintances, —the gentlemen who had taken possession of our apartment at Escaldos,—entered. We thought that these Spaniards would have remained at Canillo; their appearance here was, therefore, very unexpected, as well as unwelcome. They were equally surprised at seeing me; for they imagined that I had gone down towards Urgel, and would hardly believe that we had crossed the mountains from Urdino when I told them I had done so. They had evidently some pressing business on hand, otherwise, they would never have quitted Canillo, and braved the storm to reach Saldeon; so I felt confident that we should experience no annoyance from them, which, had they attempted, might have delayed, or altogether prevented their accomplishing their intentions. The party had considerably increased in numbers, for there were now nine of them, and

they talked as if they expected some others to arrive.

When Etienne returned, he was astonished to find the cabin completely filled; but, when he observed who were talking to me, he looked anything but satisfied; and I could observe the gradual sinking of his under jaw as he counted their numbers. We were, certainly, in a somewhat awkward situation, supposing that the Spanish party had any evil intentions regarding us, if,—as I sometimes feared they would, from some questions which they asked,—they should take me for one of the agents of the Spanish parties who were fighting. They might then suppose, that I was worth robbing; and, of course, robbing, with such fellows, implied murdering; which, from their numbers, had they determined upon treating us in this manner, they had every prospect of succeeding in. But there was no use in supposing what, most probably, they had never thought about; and, even had there been cause for any suspicion, a seeming indifference to their presence was the best way of getting through the affair. So, when Etienne came to tell me that there was a large loft nearly filled

with hay, and sacks of wool, in which we could sleep, and pinched my shoulder while he was doing so, the meaning of which I fully comprehended, I lengthened his countenance still more by bursting out a laughing. I then told the Spaniards, that, as they were wet, and we were sleepy, that we should relinquish to them our places at the fire, and return to the hay-loft, which, I was told, was very large; and where, if they were inclined, after warming themselves, to sleep, I believed there would be room for all of us. The Andorrian was already fast asleep in one corner of the cabin; so we left him there, and, taking a lamp with us, adjourned to the hay-loft. It was very spacious, and, although half-filled with hay and woolsacks, there was still more than sufficient space, for a larger party than we and the Spaniards together would have formed, to have been as restless as we chose in our sleep, and yet not have incommoded each other with our kicking.

As soon as we were assembled together in the loft, a sort of whispering consultation was held upon the necessity of our being prepared in the event of the Spaniards making any attempt upon

us. Etienne did not know what to make of them, he did not like what our friend of Escaldos had told us regarding them, but he agreed with me in thinking that they had certainly some affair of moment which they were in haste to execute, and which might prevent their thinking of any thing else; but at all events it was better to be prepared for the worst, so we took our places in one corner of the loft, where we could not be surrounded, and where we could most easily defend ourselves.

We soon made a bed of hay in our corner, and with our arms beside us, and four of our number sleeping while the fifth watched, we were as safe as our situation could permit of our being. I did not fall as soon asleep as the others, among whom was the first watch, who had at last yielded unwittingly to the fatigue of the day's journey and closed his eyes, and the lamp was still burning in a niche in the wall, when the door of the loft opened, and the Spaniard who had been most enraged at being locked up at Escaldos, made his appearance. He seemed surprised when he observed the light, but the snoring of my friends was evidence of their being

asleep, and he stepped towards us. He was only one, there was no use in disturbing the sleeping party, so I merely laid my hand upon one of my pistols, and watched his proceedings. I was in the shade of the lamp, so that he could not see me distinctly, or discern whether I was asleep or not, but he seemed anxious not to disturb us, for he trode as gently as possible, and stopped several times before he reached our corner. Each sleeping man had his musket along side of him, and I could observe the rascal knit his brows as he saw the position which we had taken; he stood within a few feet of us for a few seconds, and then turning round, stole away as gently as he had approached us. I thought it was now time to rouse Etienne, which I did, and told him what had taken place, and he instantly roused the others; we did not, however, make any noise, or alter our position, but determined to remain awake for some time, and by snoring in turn, lead the Spaniards, should they return, to believe that we were still asleep. A couple of hours passed over, and they came not, so I told Etienne, that I did not think that we should see them again, more particularly as the fellow who

came to reconnoitre did not carry off the lamp with him, which, had there been any mischief to take place, it would have been better for them to be without.

Etienne, therefore, volunteered to watch, and I and the others dropped asleep. Whether Etienne fell asleep or not, I do not know, but daylight was shining brightly into the loft when he awoke us. We found the landlady of the cabin, the old idiot woman, and the children all stirring, and we learnt that the Spaniards had departed about midnight, immediately after the storm had subsided. I could now understand what the rascal was in search of, who paid us the visit during the night previous to their leaving the cabin. He evidently came for the purpose of carrying away any articles belonging to us which he could have laid his hands upon without disturbing us, but our position, and the light from the lamp, had disappointed him; this attempt of his, had therefore, been a private speculation of his own, with which the party had had no concern. It was fortunate for us, that he had not endeavoured to lay his hands upon any thing belonging to us, as I should have shot him, and we should then have

had the whole party upon us. Before quitting Saldeou, and following upon the track of the Spaniards, who, if they had not stopped by the way, were already in Arriege; we partook of a second edition of the soup which we had cooked the preceding night.

The ascent of the frontier line of mountains commences a short distance from Saldeou, and until the first summits have been passed, there are no particularly interesting features in the landscape. At the source of the Val d' Embalire we passed the last Andorrian hamlet in the district, whose inhabitants had been robbed and plundered a few days before by the Carlists. It seemed that a party of these marauders had come down upon the village during the night, and calling up the inhabitants, had made them deliver up to them whatever provisions, powder, and other articles could be easily carried off. The poor people regretted exceedingly the loss of all the cheeses which they had been providing as a store for the winter.

From a spot near the Port de Framiquel, Etienne pointed out to me the situation of the iron mines of Carol. I ascertained from him,

that every inhabitant of the commune is at liberty to search for mineral, and dispose of it as he pleases, but that no one who is not a native can do so. Hence the difficulty which some speculators, who have supposed that large fortunes were to be made by working the mines of silver or copper in the Pyreneés, have experienced in making an agreement with the inhabitants of the commune in which the minerals were situated, quarrels frequently ensuing, and obliging the enterprising individual, after having embarked large sums of money in the undertaking, to relinquish the project.

Upon the Arriege side of the Port de Framiquel, and at the base of the immense perpendicular mountain, which partly separates that department from Andorre, is the lake which is the source of the river Arriege. The Andorrian possessions skirt one side of this stream, as far as the village of the Hospitalet, and are the best pasture districts appertaining to the republic. The mountains upon the opposite side belong to Arriege and Carol, and the path from the valley of Carol into Arriege, enters by the Port de Puymorin, or

as it is sometimes styled, the Port d' Hospitalet.

We kept upon the Andorrian side of the valley, and numerous as are the spots where the choicest wild flowers may be gathered in these Pyreneés, I never beheld such quantities of them any where, as I did here. Their profusion was such, and their various tints and colours so beautiful, that in stepping among them I almost felt that I was committing sacrilege; I could venture to say, that a larger and more exquisitely beautiful natural flower terrace than that between the Port de Framiquel and the Hospitalet does not exist.

Before arriving at the village of the Hospitalet, there is a fine natural meadow, containing, perhaps, forty acres, and surrounded by a stone wall. Etienne directed my attention to the spot, and told me that for upwards of fifty years this meadow had been the subject of litigation between the Andorrians and the neighbouring French communes, and that it was only a few months since the suit had been decided in favour of the republic. The value of the meadow might be about 3000 francs.

A company of soldiers were quartered in the

frontier village, and the sentinel on guard at the entrance demanded my passport; I gave it to him, but, not being able to read it, he called a comrade from the guardhouse; the new comer was as illiterate as the other, and it was actually the sixth individual of the party on duty who examined my passport who could read it; whether the sixth really could read or not, I could not positively say, but at all events he looked as if he could, and returned it to me, telling me that I might proceed.

The appearance and comforts of the little auberge at the Hospitalet, contrasted with those of the posadas of Andorre, were transformed into luxuries of no mean order, and were most acceptable and grateful to the senses. I do not think I ever felt so hungry in my life, as I did when I entered this auberge, and scented the well dressed viands which were preparing for the dejeuner of the officers of the detachment who were lodged in the house; and when the smart-looking pretty waiting girl, dressed in the costume of the department, asked me what I should wish to have for breakfast, I only desired her to let me have

whatever she could give me as soon as possible, and plenty of it, for I had just come from Andorre, where I had been for some days. Thanks to the military for having taken up their quarters in the auberge, as their doing so insured good "entertainment" to the traveller, and a quarter of an hour had not elapsed before I was seated at a table with half a dozen dishes before me, the contents of which, for cooking and excellence, would not have thrown discredit either upon the "Burlington" or "Long's."

"Ah, monsieur," said the waiting girl, "you have been in a poor country, where there is nothing to eat or drink, and where no one goes but the miners or the contrabandiers, where there are not such pretty girls as you will see in our country, and where there are not any gay soldiers to laugh and dance with."

"But the country is beautiful, although the people are somewhat sauvage," said I.

"Yes," said she, "but our country is beautiful also, yet it would not be habitable were there no inducements to stay in it but to look at its woods, and mountains, and vines; no, no, I love it well

enough, but were there no such merry meetings as we have to enliven us, were there no civil strangers coming to visit us, why it would not be bearable."

"And the military, you would not like them to leave the valley," said I.

"They are the best creatures in the world," said she.

"Gay, civil, and obliging," said I.

"They are always either dancing or singing, and I always find them ready to carry my pitchers from the stream, or relieve me of my basket when I go to Ax," said she.

"And you are going to be a soldier's wife," said I.

"If monsieur will stay here for another week, he will be able to judge for himself," said she.

Etienne entered, accompanied by a superior looking individual, whom he introduced to me as a cousin of his who was on his way to Bordeaux. When paying my bill, I again asked mademoiselle if she was about to marry a soldier, and she acknowledged that upon the ensuing Friday she was to be united to the handsome corporal of the detachment, whom she pointed out to me among a group of soldiers who were standing near the

window. I wished her joy and much happiness, and as she was the daughter of the aubergist, and heiress of his property, I advised her to procure her husband's discharge, and remain in her native village.

Etienne was to accompany me to Ax, but there was no use in taking the rest of the party, so they set out on their return to Carol; and Etienne, his cousin (who wished me to mount his horse), and myself, proceeded down the valley. This cousin of Etienne's was one of the most considerable merchants in the district of Carol, and I acquired from him considerable information regarding its industry and commerce. I mentioned that the inhabitants of the valley of Carol employed themselves during the winter in making stockings. This manufacture has existed for many generations in the valley, and has greatly conduced to the comfort and welfare of its inhabitants. There are upwards of thirty thousand dozen of pairs exported annually, and the demand for them is constantly on the increase. They are sent to Bordeaux, Toulouse, and all parts of France. The wool made use of is Spanish, and the stockings vary in price from

ten to forty sous a pair, and are all knitted. My companion bought up all those which were intended for the Bordeaux market, and was upon his way there to obtain orders. I asked him if, supposing the valley could produce double the amount of pairs which it did, he thought they could find sale for them, and he told me that ten times the number produced could be disposed of to advantage; that all the peasantry throughout the interior were glad to obtain them, and that at the fair of Bordeaux alone, he could sell to the amount of the present supply. Why, then, did they not establish the manufacturing of the stockings by machinery?

"Because we are not permitted to build a manufactory. Government will not allow the inhabitants within a certain distance of the frontier, to erect machinery for commercial purposes; and, although the southern districts have complained of this great hardship, over and over again, to the Chamber of Deputies, by means of their representatives, whom they have latterly elected solely upon condition that they should exert their influence to obtain for them the removal of this grievance, they have never yet been

able to succeed in their endeavours; and we are obliged to go on in our old way, when, by having justice bestowed upon us, our districts would become the most flourishing in France."

He attributed the continuance of this oppressive and impolitic law to the "partiality of the government shown to the northern districts—they send a greater number of deputies to the Chamber; and they legislate for the South as it suits their convenience. There is no such oppressive tax upon industry on the Northern frontier; on the contrary, every encouragement is held out to its inhabitants; but here, in the South, our commercial spirit and enterprise is cramped and checked by laws of the most arbitrary as well as impolitic nature. From the great advantages which we possess, by our situation, enabling us to employ the most extensive machinery, so great is the water power which we could call into requisition; and our vicinity to the market where we procure the raw material, we could afford to sell our produce much cheaper than we can at present do; and we could give constant employment to a much greater number of our countrymen. And this injustice is not confined to our

particular district, or to the article which we manufacture; but the whole frontier is included in the law which prohibits the erection of machinery, and thus the commercial exertions of the inhabitants of a country some hundred leagues in length, and ten broad, are paralyzed. But the people of the South of France are beginning to be sensible of the injustice that is done them by the government, and will eventually force an acknowledgment of their rights."

This is but a solitary instance of the internal mis-government of France, particularly as regards her commercial laws, many of which are of the greatest detriment to her interests, and must ever prevent her becoming a great commercial nation. Were the commercial laws of France revised, and placed upon the footing which, for the good of the nation, they ought to be, there could be no limits set to the prosperity which would reign throughout the interior, and which, at present, is confined to a few maritime towns and districts. And were Great Britain, at the same time, studying its true interest, in preference to harbouring a foolish and altogether unfounded feeling of jealousy against France, to act in the same spirit,

so as to render the advantages which both the countries would acquire from a more liberal commercial intercourse reciprocal, she would find a mart for her commodities of ten times more value to her than half her colonies and possessions. France produces some articles which Great Britain naturally cannot do; or unattended with great expense. Great Britain, on the other hand, can never fear competition with her manufactories from France; that country does not naturally possess the materials for constituting it a *cheap* manufacturing country, which Great Britain enjoys to an unlimited extent. It is, therefore, most ardently to be hoped, that the present good understanding which subsists between the two countries may continue; that such useful and profitable changes in the laws which regulate their commercial intercourse, may take place as is absolutely necessary for their mutual welfare: and we may rest assured, that, when such alterations have been effected, the peace and happiness of Europe will be more securely established by that act than by all the treaties which have ever been signed; it will then be based upon the surest of all foundations—mutual interest.

Whenever the feeling has grown up in France and England, that they are mutually dependent upon each other, that their best interests render it necessary that such should be the case, all jealousy and rivalry between them must subside; friendship (interested although it may be at first) will take their place, and all the world will be benefited by it.

From the Hospitalet to the village of Merens, the valley is narrow and uninteresting, hemmed in by stony-looking mountains; it afterwards narrows so as to become a mere defile; until, passing through a gorge where there is just sufficient room for the river and the road, it at once expands, and Ax, and the hills which surround it are beheld.

I found Ax both a larger and more civilized place than I expected; and, in the principal hotel of the place (I forget what name it bore), most comfortable apartments and good living are to be obtained. Here, having settled with my worthy friend Etienne, whom I had found a most trustworthy, intelligent, and obliging companion, we parted, mutually pleased, I believe, with each other, and trusting that, upon some future occa-

sion, we should have another, and a longer, wandering among these mountains.

I can look back with many pleasing recollections, upon the days and weeks which I have spent in the society of the guides, chasseurs, and contrabandiers of the Pyreneés; for, all of them, —with one or two exceptions, and these were in districts where intercourse with the world has blunted their native sense of honour and good feeling,—have, like Etienne, left traces of their fidelity and trustworthiness upon my memory.

CHAPTER IX.

Ax—Mont St. Barthelemy—French Carlists—French Police System—Compliment paid by a French Author to the Populace of Edinburgh—Valley of the Arriege—Old Castle—Caverns—Tarascon—Mistake of a Gendarme—Mode of training the Vines—Early History of Arriege—Counts of Foix—Town and Castle of Foix—Old Jailor—Strength of the Castle—Interior of the Church—Fugitives from the Cholera.

THE minor articles conducive to the comforts of civilized life are not sufficiently estimated until we have been deprived of their use; and they who would fully appreciate the invaluable properties of the substance called soap; the great advantage of having clean towels over having none at all; the comforts of clean sheets; nay,

the very sight of a piece of pure linen:—must go and sojourn for a few days in Andorre.

Ax is very prettily situated at the junction of three considerable streams; the Arriege, whose source I had seen below the Port de Framiquel; the Arriege, from the valley d'Orlu; and the Ode, from a valley of the same name. It lies, therefore, in a sort of basin, formed by the union of those valleys. The hills in its immediate neighbourhood are neither high nor steep, permitting of cultivation being carried far up their sides, as in the valleys of Luz, Argeles, and others. Ax is not one of the fashionable watering-places of the Pyrenees; and the strangers who resort to it during the summer months are chiefly composed of those who hope to receive benefit from its medicinal waters, which, in their various properties, are inferior to none in the mountains.

The reason why Ax has not become a place of much more consequence than it is; and to which the picturesque scenery in its vicinity, the beautiful rides and walks which surround it, its mineral baths and springs, and its easy access, entitle it; is altogether owing to the want of spirit and enterprise among its inhabitants, dis-

played in the almost total disregard which they evince in providing for the accommodation of its visitors. Excepting the hotel in which I resided, and which, in size and comforts, is not second to even those of Bagnères, there is scarcely a habitable *appartment* in the village. Government have an establishment at Ax for the benefit of military invalids, and it has been improving the baths latterly; but, unless the people of the village do something themselves, there will never be very great attractions at Ax for that class of visitors who frequent the Pyreneés for pleasure and amusement, as well as in the pursuit of health. Ax is, however, well worth visiting, and the traveller may fix upon it as a centre from which he can make many pleasant excursions. From it he can visit Andorre; he can cross the mountains by Querigut to Perpignan, by no means an uninteresting path; he can gain the summit of Mount St. Barthelemy, and he can explore the recesses of many beautiful lateral valleys.

The view from the summit of Mont St. Barthelemy, which is also called the Pic de Taube, is very extensive, and diversified with villages,

rivers, woods, and mountain-peaks. It is about twelve hundred toises in height, and abutting into the low countries, the line of the mountains upon the east and west of it can be traced to a great distance. To the west, the bold and rugged outline of the Andorrian frontier, the Mont Calm, the lofty and peculiarly shaped Mont Vallier, the glaciers of the Maladetta, the innumerable summits of the mountains in the vicinity of the valleys of Anlus, of Castillon, of Luchon; and, last, and most distant of the whole, the Pic du Midi of Bigorre, are within the horizon. To the east, the mountains of the valleys of Aude and Carol, those at the source of the Tet, the masses of Mont Louis, and the majestic Canigoû, are the most imposing features. Mont St. Barthelemy, similarly situated to the Pic de Midi de Bigorre, possesses the same qualifications which constitute the former one of the finest "points de vue" in the Pyreneés.

The inhabitants of Arriege are chiefly attached to the Ex-royal Family; and, therefore, more inclined to be of service to Don Carlos. To prevent them, as much as possible, from rendering him assistance, the French government had

adopted very strict police regulations; and, as if they could not safely trust the local authorities, they had sent down an extraordinary inspector of police from Paris. This officer, or agent, wore no uniform, nor any insignia, by which he might be distinguished; and his business was to be a spy upon every one, natives and strangers. I had been but a few hours in Ax, until he had been informed of the arrival of a stranger; and he made his appearance, perfectly informed of where I had come from, and what had been my proceedings; all of which he had extracted from Etienne, who had not the slightest suspicion of his profession.

The police system of France may be necessary for the internal regulation and order of that kingdom, but it is, nevertheless, very tyrannical in its character, Instead of being "the terror of evil-doers," and the protection and safety to the respectable portion of the community, its rigours press equally upon all. The same means which are resorted to for the detection of the guilty, the laws which prevent their quitting the district in which they may be residing without permission of the civil authorities, are enforced against the

honest, the best known, and most respectable bourgeois; the most noted merchant, the most influential landed proprietor, have to submit, have to pass through the same ordeal as the thief and the blackguard. Liberty and equality have been war-cries to our French neighbours; but, hitherto, the liberty which they have acquired has been confined to the mere act of substituting one government for another; their equality, to the position which every inhabitant of the country occupies under their police system. The veriest rascal that ever breathed can, in France, say to the highest citizen in it, "You cannot leave any town without submitting to the same formula which I must do. Here we are on a par; your character is of no use to you; you cannot leave this place without obtaining legal permission to do so; and you cannot travel any great distance without frequently reporting yourself to the police officer of the district. Thus you and I are, in regard to *liberty*, upon an *equality!*"

I recollect the remarks of a French author* upon this subject. He was present in Edinburgh

* M. Amedée Pichot.

during the visit of George IV. to that city; and he thus compares the manner in which order is kept in the two countries:—

"Le roi de la Grande Bretagne est reçu dans sa capitale d'Ecosse par des sujets respectueux, mais non serviles; avec les acclamations de la loyauté, mais non avec celle d'un lâche avilissement. Sur le continent, nous ne pouvons avoir de fêtes sans gendarmes, et ces agens d'une police plus oppressive que protectrice, nous font trop souvent payer cher l'ordre qu'ils maintiennent, par dê brutales reprimandes prodiguées a l'empressement et a l'enthousiasme. Ici, les constables sont reélement une magistrature de paix; ils sont les amis, les parens des citoyens; ils sont citoyens euxmêmes, et non les salariés d'une petite tyrannie subalterne. Grâce aux conquêtes de l'empereur, nous avons vu de belles fêtes militaires; mais alors les soldats seuls pouvaient se dire *chez eux* dans nos cités: il fallait les voir de loin ou s'exposer à leurs insolentes bourrades. Ici, point de ces haies de menaçantes baïonnettes, rideau formidable tiré entre le prince et ses sujets accourus sur son passage; seulement, à de longues distances, quelques cavaliers servent à

marquer aux spectateurs la limite qu'ils ne franchiront pas."

This is no slight compliment paid, by a French author, to my countrymen; and I think that I may return him one to which he is justly entitled. It is with regard to the politeness and civility which the very poorest of the French peasantry display when they meet each other; no matter how shabby their dress and appearance may be, they invariably in the South, and almost generally in the North, salute each other by taking off their hats or bonnets, and always address each other with the words, "Sir," or "Madame;" in fact, the politesse of the French peasantry is on a par, perhaps superior, to that of our middle classes.

Ax has seen more busy and stirring times than most of the frontier towns Previous to the present Spanish war, commercial intercourse, to a very great extent, subsisted between Arriege and Spain, carried on by means of the many different ports by which access can be had into either country. This great source of prosperity to the district has, however, been destroyed, occasioning much inconvenience and poverty to the

inhabitants. During the war of independence, Mina, and his formidable Guerillas, were wont to visit Ax; not for the purpose of drinking its waters, or enjoying its baths, but to levy contributions; and, throughout the continuance of that war, Spaniards of all parties made Ax their place of refuge; and the present war has drawn thither a number of the clergy, and other individuals, holding political tenets at variance with those of the most powerful party in the several districts from which they come. Thus, both Carlists and Christinos were in Ax when I was there.

That part of the valley of Arriege between Ax and Tarascon, I thought not unlike some Highland valleys which I have seen, particularly where its mountains are covered with heath, and dotted with patches of cultivation. The grain which we call buck-wheat, and which in the South is called blénoir, is the staple product of the department; when in flower, its appearance is beautiful, greatly resembling "None-so-pretty." The valley is very populous, filled with villages and hamlets, and the remains of what have been, in other times, very fine old chateaux. One, in particular, is remarkable for its lofty and com-

manding situation. It is called Lordat. It has been built upon the peak of a high and isolated mountain, abrupt and difficult of approach; its rocky heights seemingly more adapted for the eyrie of the eagle than for the abode of men. The pomp and pride of feudal power has, however, contended successfully against natural obstacles, and have perched among the clouds the old chateau of Lordat. The ruins of its old towers and walls are very extensive, bespeaking the wealth and consequence of its owners; who might, so long as they had provisions, resist with impunity, and defy, every effort to disturb them in their nest. The ancient barons of Lordat have now passed away, and with them the glory and grandeur of their house. Their descendents are still barons of Lordat, and are contented, from their comparatively humble chateau of Vebre, in the bosom of the valley, to look upon the abode of their ancestors with feelings of reverence and awe, satisfied that, as it was proper for their ancestors, great and powerful as they were, to live in an *exalted station*, so it suits them, in their political decay, to inhabit a humble one.

Near the village of Les Cabanes, the waters

which flow through the valley d'Aston, and have their source among the high mountains to the west of Andorre, join the Arriege, which latter valley, unlike most, which generally widen as they lengthen into the plain, becomes here narrow and contracted, bounded on both sides by immense walls of lime-stone rock, which abound in numerous caverns and grottos, remarkable for their dimensions, and the beauty of the stalactites which they contain. Behind the mineral establishment of Ussat, are some of the most extensive of those natural galleries. Ussat is almost close to Tarascon; it is upon the east bank of the river, and consists of two very excellent hotels, which, embosomed in woods at some distance from the road, with the river flowing past within a few yards of them, and the tall rocks mantling above them, present as agreeable and inviting an aspect as the proprietors of the place could desire.

In one of the caverns in the rocks opposite to Ussat have been found a great quantity of human bones, mingled with those of bears, and other animals; which is not, however, a very difficult circumstance to account for, as those caves have, undoubtedly, at some period or other, been inha-

bited, as dwellings, by the peasantry, in the same manner as those in the free-stone rocks on the banks of the Loire, and other places, where thousands of the labouring population are, at this moment, residing. In a warm climate, these houses in the rocks are far more comfortable than those built in the open air ; they preserve a more equal temperature, in summer they are not too hot, and in winter they are much warmer. Chimneys are pierced through the rock in every direction; and it is a curious sight to see the smoke, bursting as if it were through the solid rock, where the situation of the cabins would, but for that circumstance, remain undiscovered; or, in other places, to observe a long line of windows, with their sashes and glass, in the face of a high wall of rock. Sometimes, when care has not been taken in scooping out these dwellings, the roof gives way, and the families are for ever buried in the mass which falls upon them. Some years ago, a marriage-party had assembled in one of those dwellings, and, with music and dancing, were spending the evening in the greatest hilarity. The happy bridegroom had gone to the door to bid a friend who was leaving the party good-bye,

when the roof came down upon those who were in the interior of the dwelling, and all of them perished in the midst of their joy and mirth, the bridegroom alone escaping the untimely fate of his wife and relations.

Tarascon was one of the four principal towns of the ancient county of Foix, and is situated in a sort of amphitheatre, formed by the junction of many lateral vallies, the most important of which is that of Vicdessos, famous for its forges, and the iron mines of its mountains; its Gave* flows through Tarascon, dividing it into two sections, and spanned by a new and very handsome bridge of three arches.

At Tarascon, I was exceedingly amused with a mistake committed by a gendarme, who had demanded my passport. After having examined it, he returned it to me, satisfied that it was perfectly regular. "You are from Ecosse?" said he.

"Yes;" answered I.

"And, pray, in what part of France is Ecosse situated?" inquired the officer of peace.

"In the north;" said I.

* The word is generic, signifying a mountain stream.

"Oh, yes!" said he—"Now I recollect perfectly well; we passed through it on our way to join the army in Flanders."

The valley of Arriege, between Tarascon and Foix, assumes a more quiet and gentle character; mountains and sterile rocks giving place to hills whose slopes are productive in grain, and whose warmer and more sheltered nooks are clothed with vineyards. The manner in which the vines are planted and trained is peculiar. In all the corn fields the stones which would otherwise encumber the soil, are gathered in heaps of various forms and sizes; among these heaps of stones the vines are planted and trained over them on poles or espaliers; the effect of this arrangement is beautiful, and the corn fields may be taken for a garden, the knots of vines for its parterres. I left the mountains to visit Foix, because I was most anxious to see a place whose ancient barons had entwined their names so gloriously in the history of their country; in early times, by their power and grandeur as feudal princes, in later times as statesmen and warriors.

The department of Arriege contains nearly the

whole of the ancient county of Foix; it is bounded on the north by the departments of the Haute Garone and the Aude; on the east by the Aude and Roussillon; on the south by Roussillon, Andorre, and Spain; and on the west by the Haute Garone.

The county of Foix, as this department was anciently styled, was governed by counts, who derived their title from its name. The Counts of Foix were descended from the Counts of Carcassonne. The first of the family whose name and deeds are renowned in history, was Raymond Roger, who succeeded his father in 1188. His first feats of arms were performed in Syria, where he fought by the side of Philip Augustus. Upon his return, he found the Counts of Comminges and of Urgel dividing his territories detween them; he attacked them, and at first gained over them many victories; but in a decisive battle which he lost, and where he was completely routed, he was taken prisoner. Raymond Roger, along with his brother, remained in captivity for four years, and it was only through the kind intercessions of the King of Arragon, and by making great pecuniary sacrifices, that they regained their liberty. The court of Rome had

about the period of their liberation, kindled that spirit of fanaticism on the continent which led to the crusade against the Albigeois in Guienne and Gascony, headed by the ferocious Simon de Montfort.

De Montfort, aware of the friendship which existed between Raymond Roger, of Foix, and the Count of Toulouse, the intended victim of the crusade, entered the county of Foix, ravaged it after his usual manner, and took the son of Raymond as an hostage, whom he detained until he had passed the ordeal of the inquisition. Raymond, faithful to his friend, the Count of Toulouse, took arms in his defence, and his first exploit was the defeating of a large reinforcement of Germans, who were on their way to join the crusaders, then besieging Lavaur. The Count of Toulouse, defeated on various occasions, at last was obliged to take refuge in his capital, and here Raymond, true in adversity as well as in prosperity, joined him, and by the vigorous and intrepid sallies which he made upon the besiegers, at last constrained them to raise the siege. Again, when the capital of the Count of Toulouse was besieged by the same party, Raymond of Foix came again to the rescue, and again

delivered it. His last military honours were gained in the assault of the castle of Mirepoix, during a severe winter, where he died, honoured and regretted by his compatriots. His chivalric generosity had endeared him both to his people and to the neighbouring states; and if he has been flattered, it was by the voice of gratitude.

There is one anecdote connected with the history of Raymond Roger, of Foix, which, if true, would considerably detract from the magnanimous character which history has accorded to him. It is related, that Raymond, the Count of Toulouse, had for some cause or other conceived a great hatred to his brother Baudouin; and upon a false accusation, had delivered him over to the secret tribunal in order to gratify his malignity. The judges were mean enough to condemn the unfortunate victim of fraternal cruelty to death, and it is said, that Raymond Roger assisted in carrying the infamous sentence into execution; the victim was hanged over a walnut-tree, by the hands of the two Counts. But this story is so very much at variance with the general character of Raymond Roger, that it is almost impossible to believe it.

The fidelity of Raymond Roger, and afterwards

that of his son Roger Bernard, to the Count of Toulouse, was repaid by the latter deserting Roger Bernard, when under the displeasure of the French king, taking arms against him, and actually bargaining for a part of his heritage.

Roger Bernard the third, had married the daughter of the prince of Bearn, and upon the death of her father, he acquired the sovereignty of that kingdom; his succession, at first disputed by the Counts of Armagnac, was eventually secured to his family, whose history from that period is that of the Princes of Bearn.

The town of Foix is situated upon the eastern bank of the Arriege, close to the river, which is here a broad and beautiful stream. It is not in any way remarkable in appearance, and would pass unnoticed by the stranger, were it not for the picturesque and interesting towers which frown over it. It is situated in a sort of triangle formed by the hills separating in three directions, forming the three valleys, through which wind the roads to Toulouse, to Bagnères, and to Ax.

The chateau is built upon a very high and isolated mass of rock, which some convulsion of nature may have detached from the mountain to the south of it, forming the pivot, as it were, of

the three valleys which branch from its base. It thus from its situation commands a most extensive prospect over the surrounding country, and from this advantageous position, as well as the rock upon which it is built being perfectly inaccessible upon all sides, except where a narrow path cork-screws (if it may be permitted to use such a term) up the steep ascent, it must, at a very early period, have been chosen for a military position. It is, therefore, impossible to tell at what period the foundations of this remarkable fortress were laid, but certain it is, that in the eleventh century it was one of the strongest of the many strongholds in the south of France. Afterwards, when it had passed into the possession of the Counts of Carcassonne, whose descendents, as Counts of Foix, made it the seat of their government, its walls resisted many a fierce assault, and its owners in their eagle's nest bid defiance to the most powerful enemies.

In 1210 the bloodthirsty and exterminating Simon de Montfort, led his crusading army to the siege of Foix, but his efforts were fruitless, and he was repulsed with much loss and dis-

honour. In 1272 the Count of Foix, emboldened by the strength and advantageous situation of his castle, in which he had shut himself up, bid defiance to the King of France, Philip the Bold, against whom he had revolted. Philip, full of indignation, and breathing vengeance, laid siege to the chateau with a great army, determined to carry the place, whatever it might cost him. The resistance was so long and so obstinate, that Philip, despairing of taking it, as a last resource, endeavoured by undermining to throw down the enormous rock upon which the castle stands. This, at a period antecedent to the invention of gunpowder, was a somewhat arduous undertaking, nevertheless, the king commenced the operation, and detached, by manual labour alone, immense blocks of the rock, until the Count, actually afraid that Philippe would succeed in destroying the castle, submitted to his liege lord.

In the fourteenth century the castle was occupied sometimes by the Catholics, sometimes by their opponents, and the scene of many a hard fought battle, lies within cannon-shot of its walls.

It was not without regret that I found the ancient recollections of the place were henceforth to be associated with those of a modern prison, destroying the imaginative reviews which the very name of Gaston Phœbus' chateau was sufficient to conjure up, of the gay and gallant troubadours who were wont to make the old walls of Foix echo to their lays of "Ladye's love" or tales of chivalry; and that the "captive's wailing voice" was now to resound among those spacious Gothic arches where festive mirth and revelry had reigned for so many centuries. I had been but a very short time in Foix before I was on my way to visit this remarkable old feudal chateau. It has undergone a sad reverse of fortune; its ancient palace halls and princely chambers, no longer the abode of regal power and lordly pomp, have, in these civilized times, been converted into cells for all sorts of offenders against the laws. Debtors, thieves, and murderers now walk "its banquet-halls deserted," and clink their chains where "beauty's feet had pressed the marble floors," and the great and mighty (although perhaps not less guilty) of

former days, had revelled in their power and state.

It is not difficult to gain admission into the chateau, particularly if the old concierge, who had charge of it when I visited it, is still there. In that case, my countrymen have only to name their country, and it will be a passport to the kindness of the old man. He was one of the few remaining heroes whose bravery had been baffled before the walls of Acre. He had witnessed most of Napoleon's victories and defeats, had been a prisoner of war in England, and there contracted his friendship for the people of that country; and he was now, in his old age, the jailor commandant of the castle of Foix. The old man and his family were at dinner when I came to ask his permission to explore the building, and I was much surprised by his rising up and shaking hands with me, and inquiring after my health since he had met me. Upon inquiry, I found, that he thought he had recognized in me another countryman, whom he had met with fishing at Pamiers. But the old gentleman was, however, notwithstanding the mistake, very glad

to see me, invited me to partake of his dinner, and upon my declining told his son to take me over the whole of the chateau, and show me all that was worth looking at.

The most ancient of the three embattled towers which rise far above the modern buildings which surround them, was erected in 1362, by Gaston Phœbus, "ce modele des heros du 14^{ieme} siecle, toujours grand, genereux, et ami de sa patrie;" it is a handsome specimen of Gothic architecture, one hundred and thirty-six French feet in height, and founded upon the highest part of the rock. It is in perfect preservation, so much so as to be the strongest and best part of the building; in different stories are apartments for the prisoners, and its summit forms a terrace, where the prisoners are permitted to walk, and from which a most superb bird's-eye view of the surrounding country is obtained. The other towers are more modern, but there are many inferior remains of the ancient fortifications, which have been abandoned, and destroyed by the ravages of time, or have had their materials employed in the erection of the modern buildings.

I have hardly ever seen a more impregnable

fortress than the chateau of Foix must have been when the only means of gaining it were by scaling its perpendicular rocks, and lofty walls, or a situation more fitly adapted for all the purposes of barbarous warfare. My conductor pointed out to me a curious mass of rock which is almost detached from the side of that which supports the castle, resting upon a very small and narrow pedestal, so small as to appear as if one kick would send it among the houses of the town far beneath it, but which defies the orages of summer and the blasts of the winter. It is called the rock of Foix, and there is some tradition, the fulfilment of which is dependent on its fall.

From the chateau I proceeded to the prefecture, in order to have my passport countersigned. The town has been built with regard to the protection afforded it by its vicinity to the chateau. Its streets and houses are, therefore, huddled together as close under its walls as possible. The Prefect was rather particular in his interrogations, before signing my passport, and expressed considerable astonishment at my preferring the long and difficult route to Bagneres de Luchon

by the mountains, to the carriage-road by St. Giron.

I walked into a fine old church, in which are two exceedingly good modern paintings by a person of the name of Racques; one represents Jesus restoring sight to the blind; the other, the draught of fishes. I have never met with any scriptural paintings which have pleased me more than these; there is a deficiency in the colouring, but the countenances of the group are beautifully executed The expression of astonishment, thankfulness and reverence depicted in that of him who has just received his sight, is perfect, while that of the old man behind him, who with outstretched arms is bending forward to receive his sight from our Saviour, is equally so; the beautifully mild and expressive countenance of Jesus, and the astonished looks of his disciples at the performance of the miracle, do great credit to the artist; the draught of fishes is of the same character. Having gratified my curiosity at Foix, I returned to Tarascon in the diligence. I had for my fellow travellers, two Frenchmen, who had left Marseilles on account of the cholera. It has been said, that fear predisposes its victims

to an attack of cholera; now, I am sure, if such was really the case, that these two gentlemen who were going to Ax must have died that same night, for I never, in the whole course of my life, saw two individuals so imbued with fear and terror as they seemed to be. While conversing upon the subject of their disquiet, I happened to mention that I had been in the neighbourhood of Drogheda when so many of its inhabitants were carried off by the cholera, upon which they immediately supposed that I could give them some sovereign specific against its attacks, and begged me to tell them what was the best measure of precaution to adopt. I told them that there were various opinions upon the subject, and different methods by which it was supposed the disease could be warded off. One method was that which numbers of the Irish during the prevalence of the cholera in their country had adopted; it was never to be sober while the cholera remained in the district: so long as they were intoxicated there was no fear of them, but if they once forgot to be drunk, then the disease was sure to seize upon them. The Frenchmen did not seem to relish this precautionary method which I offered to

their notice; so I gave them another which met with more success. It was to refrain from eating salads to breakfast, or drinking the indifferent wines of the country, and never by any chance to taste the unripe fruits daily presented to them at the inns, but to give up their French habits and tastes, and live, à la John Bull, upon solids.

CHAPTER X.

Valley of Vicdessos—Castle of Miglos—Its striking resemblance to Castle Campbell—Mines of Raincié—Privileges of the Miners—Cause of the high price of Iron—Auzat—Valley of the Saliex—Contrabandiers of the Pyreneés—Port d'Aulus—Mont Calm—Domestic Unhappiness of my Guide—Mountain Scenery—Beautiful Valley of Aulus—Fountain of Nanpounts—Rencontre with a Countryman—Short Beds—Village of Erce—Pyrenean Peasants' knowledge of the World—Feuds—Hunting Quarters—Dogs can "love at first sight."

My route now lay through the valley of Vicdessos, and across the mountains which separate it from that of Aulus. As I was anxious to make a considerable day's work, I quitted Tarascon at a very early hour.

The valley of Vicdessos is narrow and confined,

hemmed in by mountains of limestone rock, in many places bare, steep, and inaccessible. The sides of the stream are rich and productive, producing fine crops of Indian corn or maize, and buckwheat. The fields are irrigated, and frequently inclosed by hedges; and as we approach the district of the iron mines, the numerous comfortable looking houses belonging to the different proprietors or managers of the various forges, surrounded by their gardens and vineyards, combine in rendering the valley of Vicdessos pleasing and agreeable.

There are the remains of several feudal strongholds in this valley, many of them in picturesque and beautiful situations: indeed the bold barons of the county of Foix seem to have known well how to choose a site for their dwellings, and through the whole line of the Pyreneés there is no district which furnishes such incontrovertible evidence of the feudal power of the ancient lords of the south of France as the department of Arriege. May not this circumstance in some measure account for the almost universal veneration of its inhabitants for "things as they were," and their attachment to the exiled family?

The appearance of some of the old castles in this valley gave me great pleasure. Those who have admired the dark ruin and beautiful situation of Castle Campbell, in the valley of the Devon, and may chance to visit the valley of Vicdessos, will recognize in the ruins of the chateau of Miglos, a most striking resemblance. The same features of hill, and wood, and deep ravine, nay, even the very form of the ruins, are the same in each, and Miglos wants but a pretty village, such as Dollar, to frown upon, to become a Castle Campbell. Many and many a time did I turn upon my way, that I might have another look at this spot, which awakened recollections of other times and distant scenes. From one spot in particular where I halted to take a last look at this chateau, the two places were so very much alike, that I am confident that if any of the old Barons of Argyle had by some magic been transported from the Ochills, and stood upon the spot which I did, and been made to gaze in the same direction, was asked what object they saw, they would have unhesitatingly declared, that they recognized their own Castle Campbell.

This is one of the most busy valleys of the

Pyreneés; the largest iron forges in the south are situated in it, giving labour and employment to thousands, and presenting a scene of bustle and activity. Before arriving at Vicdessos, I observed the narrow path which leads to the mines of Raincié, in the mountain, some 4,000 feet above the road, and down which a long cavalcade of mules loaded with mineral were descending. These mines are the most productive of the Pyreneés; they furnish annually above 300,000 quintals of ore, which is distributed among forty forges, many of them situated at a very considerable distance from the mines.

There are two mines in the mountains of Raincié which, at a great depth, communicate with each other. Two hundred men are employed in each mine, who are under the direction of four commissaires, paid by the government, to whom the mines appertain. The labourers work seven hours a day, and notwithstanding the fatigue and danger which they undergo, their wages are not more than one franc, seventy centimes, or about fifteen pence a day. The descent into the mines is difficult and tedious, but not more so than into many of the various mines in Great Britain. The

entrance is through a long muddy gallery which opens into an immense excavation, which has, in the course of ages, been formed by the enormous quantities of ore which have been extracted from it. A winding path among the debris in the bottom of this subterranean hall, and another suspended half-way up its sides, formed by planks supported upon iron bars driven into its walls, conduct to the entrance of the narrow, slippery, and winding corridors which lead to the spots where the mineral is dug out. These paths are in many places difficult and dangerous, and the poor overloaded miner has not unfrequently, carrying his lamp in his mouth, to crawl over such spots upon his hands and knees. The miners of Raincié are, like their brethren in other places, subject to frequent danger from the closing up of the passages by the falling in of their walls and roofs. In the year 1821, seventy miners were inclosed in this manner. The quantity of matter which choked up the gallery was so great, that it was at first thought impossible to extricate them, and the whole valley was a scene of weeping and wailing; but the energy and perseverance of their friends and relatives, aroused by the near pros-

pect of the death of those dear to them, and animated by the courage of M. Vergnies, the Maire of Vicdessos, who never quitted the workmen, the unhappy wretches, who had given themselves up for lost, were extricated from their living tomb.

Man has been doomed to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow; so it is with all of us, but nevertheless, how very different is the condition of one class of our fellow-creatures compared with that of others! During the outcry raised by those who were interested in the continuance of the West India slaves in a state of bondage, it was urged as an argument, that the condition of the slaves was much more comfortable than that of British labourers in general; but how infinitely preferable the condition of both, to that of the miner doomed in some places by law, in others by nature, to gain his bread by the sweat of his brow, but works for it in the bowels of the earth, amid darkness and impurity of air, aware that danger and death surround him on all sides, that each stroke of his pickaxe may perchance be hastening his own destruction; and who seldom participates in the enjoyment—undenied even to the meanest

of God's creatures, breathing the pure air of heaven.

These mines of Raincié have been wrought for more than six centuries; and, from the quantity of mineral which the mountain contains, there can be no limits set to its supply. Roger Bernard, of Foix, confirmed, in 1273, the right which the inhabitants of the valley claimed, to be the sole workers of these mines, and subsequent charters have renewed to them the privilege; but it is only used by the inhabitants of the nearest villages, those of Sem, Gonlier, and Olbier. The ore is sufficiently productive; but, notwithstanding this, and the cheapness of labour, the iron, when manufactured, is very dear. This is partly owing to the imperfect nature of the machinery employed; which is, however, at Vicdessos, very superior to that in most of the Pyrenean iron foundries; but, more particularly, to the great expense of fuel. There are few, almost no forests, in the vicinity of the forges, consequently, the charcoal has to be transported for immense distances, sometimes fifty miles, of land carriage; thus rendering the material produced, rather an article of luxury than a useful

commodity. But I do not despair of seeing all the forges of the Pyreneés cease working, which they must do, the moment the French government cease to consider private gain as commensurate with the public prosperity.

Vicdessos is a prettily-situated and well-built little town, upon the right bank of the river which bears its name, and in the centre of a fertile basin, into which numerous valleys and ravines open in all directions. Some of its mountains are wild and Alpine, partially wooded, and affording some good pasturages; others are sterile and rocky. The auberge in which I breakfasted was excessively clean, and the eatables produced excellent; but, no wonder, for the landlord,—a most civil and obliging personage,—was both an old soldier and a gentleman. He procured me an excellent guide, and we proceeded up the valley of the Saleix.

The entrance to this valley is narrowed by an isolated monticule, upon which are the ruins of some old fortifications, which the tradition of the country tells us are the remains of a Roman fortress. To the south of the monticule, is the village of Auzat, whose inhabitants are chiefly

composed of miners, labourers in the forges, and the most noted smugglers in the Pyreneés. The contrabandiers of the Alps, and of Switzerland, are principally engaged in the smuggling of articles of a very portable nature, such as jewels, watches, laces, &c.; those of the Pyreneés have much harder work to perform, and double the danger and risk to undergo. Tobacco and wool are the somewhat ponderous articles which they have to carry; and, as they cannot elude the douaniers with such loads, as those can who have merely a few watches and chains to incommode their flight, they are consequently obliged to choose more dangerous paths, more stormy weather, and more circuitous routes, in pursuing "their calling" than the Alpine contrabandier, whose life is one of comparative comfort, when compared with that of the Pyrenean.

In "thunder, lightning, and in rain," when the elements are warring in such fearful mood as to drive the very beasts of the forest to seek for safety and for shelter, then it is that the contrabandier of the Pyreneés is reaping the harvest of his profession; he is then, perhaps, the only living creature who exults among the wilds of

the mountains; and, if he ever utters a prayer, or tells his beads, it is when all nature is raging round him; and its purport, that the storm may not subside. In such times, the contrabandier knows well, that the douanier will not cross his path; and that, should he pass in safety those places where, on account of the terrible force of the wind, it is a proverb among the mountaineers, "that there the father never waits for his son, nor the son for his father," his hardships and his dangers will be well repaid him. The contrabandiers of the Pyreneés are sometimes French, sometimes Spanish; but the most daring and hardy of all, are a race born in Spain,* but whose fathers have been French. Both countries are alike subject to the audacity of this class, who, armed to the teeth, never hesitate at shooting the douaniers when they think that the urgency of the occasion requires it. The douaniers, aware of the desperate character of the men with whom they have to deal, are, not infrequently, obliged to overlook the delinquencies of these contrabandiers.

Upon one occasion, when a contrabandier of

* Generally known by the name of Miguelets.

this lawless description was resting in a solitary auberge, and, as usual, completely armed, and indifferent to the presence of the other inmates of the place, was clearing his pipe with the point of his long poignard; and, having finished the operation, he turned the weapon several times round, regarding it with much complacency before returning it again to his pocket, seeming well pleased with the good service which it might upon trying occasions, have rendered him, when a gendarme who was present, observing the action, immediately placed his hand upon the pocket of the contrabandier, telling him, that he could not be allowed to enter the French territory armed.

"Ha!" said the contrabandier—"Is it not permitted to cut our tobacco and our bread?"

"Certainly;" replied the gendarme,—"but you have more *there* than is necessary to cut your tobacco and your bread."

"Yes;" replied the other, with a significant look—"but the wolves, and the dogs, it is necessary that we should defend ourselves against them."

The contrabandier uttered this with such apparent carelessness, but, at the same time,

hauteur, that the gendarme, more accustomed to ask for passports than for poignards, thought it most prudent not to insist. The costumes of the contrabandiers vary in the different districts of the Pyreneés; but it is always of a light and simple description, suited to the character of the wearer.

The valley of Saleix is not remarkable for its beauty, but for the splendid mountain scenery in its vicinity. We sat down to rest and refresh ourselves near the Port d'Aulus; and from this spot I could distinguish all the summits to the north and south of Mont St. Barthelemy, but those in my more immediate neighbourhood deserve particular regard. To the south of the monticule upon which rests the old Roman fort, rises a mountain far higher, but resembling the other in form and shape; to the south of this rises another mountain of like form, but of far greater height, and beyond this last rises the magnificent Mont Calm, to a height of 1620 toises. The Mont Calm is remarkable, not only by reason of its appearance and majestic height, but on account of its formation; it, and the summits near it, the

Pic d'Estats and the Punta de Medacourbe, are composed of what M. du Mege classes under the term "terrain de transition," and are among the loftiest of their kind in the Pyreneés.

In the valley of Saleix, I observed the best crops of potatoes I had seen in France, where potatoes are not cultivated to any great extent, and do not form an essential article of food.

My guide, a very active and intelligent young fellow, amused me excessively by the relation of his domestic arrangements. It seemed that he had the misfortune to marry a woman about ten years older than himself, and that the difference in the ages of the pair had (as is usual in such cases) been the source of much discomfort and annoyance.

"I work hard," said he, "the whole day, but I must account for every farthing which I gain to the old woman; I am never allowed to spend a sous with my companions, or in buying powder for the chasse; and I dare not look at, much less speak to any of the girls of the village, because if the old woman saw me do so, or heard of it from any one, she would do nothing but

scold for days, so that what with her stinginess and her jealousy, I am the most unhappy man in all our valley."

"And why do you not leave her?" inquired I.

"Oh! I have often been advised to do so, and M. Merry (the person who recommended him to me), who has been very kind to me, and who is acquainted with all the circumstances, has offered to take me into his service should I do so; but the old woman has two children by me, and I cannot think of leaving them, so that I am forced to submit to all the indignities and misery which she occasions me." The poor fellow, like all others who fall into the same predicament, was to be pitied, but not comforted.

From the summit of the Port, another magnificent range of summits present themselves; they are those which extend from the Pic de Bonrepaux, to that promontory of the high central range of the Pyreneés, the Tuc de Mauberme, and includes the high mountains at the source of the valley of Sallat, and around the Port d'Aulus. But among a host of peaks, the double peak of

Mount Vallier appears preeminent in height, and unrivalled in grandeur.

The beautiful and riant basin of Aulus is the commencement of the valley d'Ercé, and one of the most exquisite spots in these mountains; it is an amphitheatre within whose circle the richest cultivation is diversified with mounds and knolls, which rising apart from each other, are covered with different species of trees, or with verdure. The stream, which is formed by the junction of torrents from the valleys Garbel and Arce, meanders in tortuous windings among the rising grounds, giving life and animation to the scene. The mountains or walls of the amphitheatre display the richest pasturages, and irrigated meadows, in some places fringing the most *escarpè* rocks, elsewhere, the mountain side is broken into numerous little dells embowered with wood, or into gorges where the mountain torrent is seen dashing down in all its beauty. Clumps of trees, as if they had been planted to complete the effect of this delightful scene, are sprinkled through the bosom of the valley, or hang upon the steeps in all directions, the intermediate spaces spangled

with wild flowers, and the ivy and wild rose clustering upon the rocks and shelves. There is here no dull uniformity to shock the admirer of natural beauty, or stiff parterres, or formal avenues; the trees are neither pruned so as to resemble maypoles, nor deformed by cutting over: nature has been the only artist consulted in its formation, and rarely has she produced a more lovely gem of natural beauty.

To the left of the descent from the Port d' Aulus into this cradle of the picturesque, is the narrow and sombre valley of Garbel, which contains a mine of lead and silver, extending to a great distance under the mountain, and which has been wrought at various periods, and by different speculators, but from its having been so frequently abandoned; I suspect that it is one of those mines of lead and silver which, by their tantalizing character, have oftener conduced to the ruin of those who speculated upon their produce, than to their profit—at one time yielding an enormous return, while at others, the workmen are fruitlessly employed for months. This mine of Garbel must have been known and wrought at a very early period, and during the troublesome

times of feudal warfare; in the vicinity of the mine a strong fortification has been erected, evidently to guard its riches from depredations, and to protect the workmen. Following the tradition of the country, this old ruin, called Castelminier, was built by the Romans when they wrought this mine, to protect the miners and their village, and destroyed by the Moors. Several antique tools, and a curious figure in bronze have been found in the neighbourhood, and are in the possession of a proprietor of the valley.

The village of Aulus is not in character with the beautiful scenery which surrounds it: it is a long narrow line of houses, most of them poor and dirty in the extreme, with the exception of those which belong to the proprietors of the forge and baths. The mineral springs of Aulus have only lately been discovered, and I believe their properties are not generally known; but if they were only half as efficacious in curing the diseases of the body, as the pleasant and agreeable environs are calculated to efface those of the mind, the baths of Aulus ought in truth to become the most frequented in the Pyrenees. The

approach to them through the valley d'Ercé, is the most safe and easy of any of the routes which lead to the watering places in the mountains, and with very little difficulty might be rendered practicable for carriages, which even now can come up the valley of the Sallat by an excellent road to Oust or Siex.

I have seldom sauntered along a path which disclosed so much loveliness as that which follows the river-side down the valley d'Ercé, and I do not think I ever saw so pure and transparent a stream; the minnows and the trouts in its deepest pools were as visible as if they had been swimming in a crystal basin. A rushing, rumbling noise proceeding from the bank upon the right of the path, betrayed the vicinity of the fountain of Nanpounts. Like other similar torrents, it gushes in a large volume of water from a mountain of primitive limestone, and the natives believe that is the outlet of the waters of the Etang de Lherz, situated a couple of miles upon the other side of the mountain. In mountains of such formation, distance is no argument against this supposition; and there are many places in the Pyrenees where such streams can be traced a

great way through the caverns in the mountains of primitive limestone.

I did not intend to remain in the village of Aulus, but to have walked down the valley to Oust or Siex, but a very unforeseen but most welcome rencontre altered my intention. At a short distance from the fountain of Nanpounts, I met a traveller whom I felt confident I had seen *somewhere* before, but when or where I could not at the moment recollect. We thus passed each other, but I had only proceeded a few paces ere I resolved to satisfy myself of the identity of the stranger; and accordingly I sent back my guide to inquire of the stranger's guide if his master was English. Having learnt that he was, I made no hesitation in introducing myself to a countryman in a place so far from home, and where two individuals of the same nation were so unlikely to meet.

My countryman I discovered to be the Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, whom I had often seen, although, until then, I had not had the good fortune to become acquainted with him. We were soon seated on the bank together, the Professor giving

me information regarding some of the routes I intended pursuing, and through which he had passed, and which I afterwards found of much service to me, and I in return mentioned to him those through which I had wandered. The Professor intended to remain all night at Aulus, I on the contrary had several hours walking before me; but the time had passed so pleasantly, that our conversation by the river side had been of some duration, when my guide, hinting as to the distance which we had to go, I shook hands with the Professor, and we pursued our different paths. But very short consideration was sufficient to convince me how much more preferable it would be to return to Aulus, and enjoy the society of a countryman, than to proceed alone to Siex. It is not often that such an agreeable rencontre takes place in such wilds; in the present instance, particularly acceptable to me from the high talents and amiable character of the individual whom I had the happiness to meet. I therefore gave orders, to the right about face, and in a very short time we overtook the Professor. I told him my intention of accompanying him back to Aulus, and he agreed with me in thinking that the

arrangement was an exceedingly good one. In the principal house of the village, we found a couple of beds which we were told we could have, and having ordered dinner, we strolled out until it was prepared for us. There is a forge at Aulus which is worked only a few months during the year, as the mineral has to be brought across the mountains from the mines of Rancié, and the charcoal all the way from St. Girons, and this in bad weather, or in winter cannot be accomplished. To the forge we directed our steps; the Professor had not, I believe, seen a forge upon the Catalan principle before, and I was anxious to have him explain part of the mystery connected with its operations which I did not altogether understand, and which he most obligingly did.

From the forge we sauntered to the summit of one of the beautifully-wooded knolls in the centre of the basin; where we remained enjoying the coolness of its shady groves, until we thought that the old woman at the auberge would be expecting our return.

Although we had secured a couple of beds, yet we occupied the same apartment; and, although indifferently well lodged, I suspect that I

was much more fortunate and comfortable than my friend. The beds were clean, and of the same length, suiting me perfectly well; but, as the Professor happens to be somewhat more than *rather* tall, it followed, as a matter of course, that the bed in which I had sufficient room to stretch myself was nearly half a yard too short for him. Nothing is more difficult, I may say, impossible, than to arrange one's-self satisfactorily in a bed which is too short; I have always found it so, and have invariably been troubled with a nervous twitching of the limbs, and a particular desire to stretch my legs out, whenever I have discovered that I could not do so; however, the Professor, accustomed to meet with such inconveniences, was much more contented than I should have been under such circumstances. Next morning, after breakfast, we proceeded on our different routes; and I left Aulus, accompanied by the proprietor of the establishment in which we had passed the night, the baths, and the forge.

The valley becomes narrower towards the village of Ercé; it is no longer interspersed with woody knolls and shady groves, and the forests hang more formally upon the mountain-sides, but

it is yet rich in that picturesque beauty which a profusion of nature's most admired features can bestow upon it; and, although the basin of Aulus is certainly the most delightful portion of it, still the long avenue which leads into it from the valley of the Sallat, forms a charming and suitable approach to the little paradise it contains.

Each valley of the Pyreneés is, to the natives of it, a little world in itself; and their traditionary history, and early associations, are limited by the mountains which inclose it; beyond which, the greater part of them never pass, but spend their lives within the circle of their own commune. Some restless and discontented spirits there may be among them, who, like Rasselas, imagining that all is harmony and happiness beyond the boundaries of their valley, leave it to make their "choice of life," to seek employment and riches, elsewhere; but, generally, a short and unsatisfactory pursuit of the object of their search, convinces them, that their habits and their ignorance have not formed them for mixing in the world, and buffetting with its storms; and they return to their birth-place, satisfied, that the simple com-

petence which it provides for all its children is more secure; and its still simpler enjoyments afford to them more substantial happiness than can be acquired by mixing with a world whose ways they do not understand, and whose subtleties are to them a riddle which they cannot solve. Such "prodigal sons," upon their return, become, from the knowledge of the world which they may have gained within a few leagues of their own valley, the oracles of the hamlet; and continue so, until some aspirant, his ambition roused by the oft-repeated tale, whose marvels increase in proportion as their novelty has worn off, follows the course of his predecessor; and, like him, returns to act his part in exciting, or imposing upon, the credulity of his community.

Quarrels and feuds are not unfrequent between the inhabitants of neighbouring valleys; and they can retain their animosity, and exercise their vengeance upon each other, as signally as ever was displayed in the annals of our Highland clans. An instance of this occurred a short time ago in the valley d'Ercé.

The property of the woods and pasturages of Fouillets, one of the upper valleys of the district,

have been, for a long period, the subject of litigation; and, of course, in such a state of society, the origin of much hatred between the inhabitants of Aulus and those of Ercé. It seems, that a native of the former commune, a man much esteemed, and the father of a family, had, as usual, gone up to the forests to procure fire-wood. Night came on, and he did not return. No one could imagine what had become of him. The whole commune assembled, and, with lights and torches, set off to the mountains. The night was spent in an unavailing search for him. The shepherds of Laspeires, natives of Ercé, when interrogated regarding him, declared that they had not seen him, although they had been all the day preceding in the vicinity of the place where he must have been cutting wood; but, upon the following day, between their cabin and Casiarens, his body was discovered in a hole, half covered over with stones, and horribly disfigured with wounds. He had been beat to death by the spades of eight men of Ercé. The victim of this feud was not more obnoxious to the inhabitants of Ercé than others of his valley, but the general hatred subsisting between the parties led

them to commit the horrid act. The murderers were tried for the crime, found guilty, and they are now in the gallies. By the commission of this crime, the breach between the parties has been so widened that they seldom or never have the slightest intercourse, although living within a couple of miles of each other. When they meet, they pass each other in silence, and without the most simple act of recognition, so common among utter strangers.

I regretted that it was not possible for me to remain a few days at Aulus, and hunt the bear among the deep and solitary ravines of the central ridge, where that lord of the Pyrenean forest is more frequently to be encountered than in most other districts of the mountains. I would strongly recommend those who are fond of this sport to make Aulus, or St. Lizier, at the *source* of the Sallat, their head-quarters for a week or two; and, if they can be successful any where in the Pyrenees, they will be successful there. The bear is now become scarce in the Pyrenees; but what of that?—there is the more glory in killing him.

My companion was possessed of a very fine

dog, of the species common on the Spanish frontier, which had paid me great attention ever since I had been rather civil to him at dinner the preceding day. The dog was now accompanying his master to his residence in the village of Oust; where we parted company, I taking the road to Seix. At the village of Oust, prettily situated at the junction of the waters of Ercé and Sallat, we enter the little plain of Seix, inclosed on all sides (except where the river Sallat has found an exit for itself) by mountains of a tamer aspect than those which border the waters of Ercé.

It was here, when it was the custom to search for gold dust in the beds of some of the Pyrenean torrents, that the greatest quantity was collected. The sands between Seix and St. Sermin were the most productive, and that found in the stream of the Nert the most esteemed. Notwithstanding this evidence of the existence of the precious metal somewhere about the source, or in the course of these streams, no mines have been discovered which could be profitably worked.

When crossing the bridge at the entrance to the village of Seix, the dog which I have mentioned as belonging to the inn-keeper of Aulus,

came up to me. He had left his master at Oust, and followed on my trail; and he appeared so glad at having overtaken me, that I allowed him to follow me to the other village, that he might have a share of my breakfast, be taken care of, and returned to his owner.

CHAPTER VI.

Destruction of the Pyrenean Forests—Anecdote of a Dog—Change of Weather—Retreat from the Mountains—Valley of the Sallat —Fly Fishing—Valley of the Castillionaise—St. Girons—The Garonne—St. Martory—Chateau de Montespan—St. Gaudens—Valley of Luchon—St. Bertrand—Industry of the Peasantry—Basin of Luchon—Pretty Blanchiseuses—Another Anecdote of a Dog—Town of Luchon—Mineral Springs—Table d'Hote—Recommendation to Travellers—Scenery around Luchon—Val de Lys—Ports of Estaous and Viel—Superstition of the Shepherds—Lakes of the Seculejo and Espingo—Glaciers of the Port d'Oo—Wild Flowers—Famous Punch.

I BREAKFASTED in company with the government inspector of the forests. He seemed perfectly aware of the shameful system of spoliation and destruction pursued among the forests of the Pyreneés, which has been prevalent for so many

years, and which, if not checked, will, at no distant period, leave those mountains as destitute of wood as the greater part of our Scottish hills and mountains were previous to the praiseworthy and patriotic exertions of their proprietors to repair the damages occasioned by the folly or carelessness of their ancestors. I mentioned to the inspector the advice which a canny Scottish laird gave to his son—"Be aye planting a tree, Jock; it will grow when ye are sleeping." And I told him, I thought the advice would be equally applicable to his government.

During breakfast, a young man entered, who stated, that he had been sent by the master of the dog to bring him back to Oust; unless I chose to retain him at the price which he had mentioned to me as that which he wished to obtain for him. Aware, that, in the event of any diligence travelling, he would be rather an inconvenient addition to my baggage, I told the lad to take him away; and as he was unwilling to quit his quarters, I threatened him with a caning, which had the effect of making him accompany the messenger.

A quarter of an hour had not, however, elapsed

from the departure of the man, ere the dog was again underneath the breakfast table; and, a short time afterwards, the lad returned, puffing and blowing, and declaring that he could not get the animal to follow him. We now tied a cord round his neck; and I bade my guide go along with the lad, and help him a part of the way home. Accordingly, the two set forth; and, wishing to put an end to the dog's friendship for me, I performed the unwilling piece of cruelty of striking him.

But all would not do; the animal proceeded quietly as far as the bridge; when, turning upon the guide, who was leading him, he nearly tore his coat off, and, regaining his liberty, came scampering into the auberge, dragging his cord along with him. I had witnessed this last exhibition from the window of the house: there could be, therefore, no doubt of the animal's affection for me, so I at once paid the price of him to the lad, and determined to take him along with me.

Hitherto I had, from the commencement of my expedition among the mountains, been so fortunate as to have had a continued track of the very finest weather—each morning came but to usher

in a day, if possible, more delicious than the preceding one. But, at Aulus, Mr. Forbes informed me, that in the Hautes Pyreneés, the weather had been very uncertain and rainy. So I thought that, most probably, in quitting Arriege, I should leave the fine weather behind me. So it really happened; for the clouds, which had looked very threatening ever since I had entered the valley of the Sallat, began to discharge their contents previous to my leaving Seix. I waited for an hour or two, in hopes that the clouds would blow over; but there was no appearance of this taking place. I had been too long accustomed to the aspect which the high and low Pyreneés present, when there is a probability of the bad weather continuing, not to foresee, upon this occasion, the little chance of fair weather for some days, at least. This being the case, I had to consider what I ought to do, and in what direction to bend my steps. My intention was, to have explored the valleys of the Castillionaise, mounted to the summit of Mont Vallier, and crossed by the Tuc de Mauberme to Bagneres de Luchon. The bad weather blew this intention to the winds; so that I was obliged, either to remain at Seix for the

arrival of more propitious weather, or proceed down the valley of Sallat to St. Giron, and thence by the diligence to Luchon. Most people are acquainted with the miseries of a country inn in rainy weather; and, as I had no inclination to become a passive spectator of the enjoyment of the web-footed tribes in the puddle, or to have to compassionate the crest-fallen cock, or the soiled and drooping plumage of his seraglio, I bade my guide strap on my knapsack. We left Seix in the rain, and proceeded down the valley; where, either at St. Girons, or at St. Martory, I would, most probably, find a diligence which would carry me to Luchon.

The river escapes from the little plain of Seix, through a dark and narrow gorge. Near which, placed upon the last peak of the chain of Uston, is the Chateau de Mirabel; its "donjon keep" is in good preservation, and overtops the surrounding woods to a great height. The road follows the course of the river, which, twisting among the many hills which form, as it were, the bulwarks, or connecting links between the mountains and the low country,—all of which so strongly resemble each other in shape and character as to

be rather monotonous,—must be, if its appearance did not greatly deceive me, a good trouting stream; its banks are unincumbered with wood, it is neither too rapid nor too still, and its waters are not so clear as the streams in the vicinity of the mountains in general are; while the excellent trouts produced at breakfast bear witness to its contents: but I am afraid that it, like most of the rivers in the south of France, is spoilt for fly-fishing by the frequent intrusion of the net. There seems to be no restriction against the use of this unfair mode of piscatory warfare in the Pyrenean departments; the net is the universal engine of destruction in use; and, consequently, those streams which, but for the system pursued, could not be otherwise than full of fish, can scarcely boast of a few minnows. Greater care is taken of some of the larger rivers; upon the Garonne, for instance, where the fishings are either let, or permission from the Government is required, before a line can be cast into it. I think that the use of the net might, with advantage to the peasant, be prohibited; for I have often heard them complain of the scarcity of fish in their streams, caused by its depredations, and

I have no doubt, that were it so, the result would be that the peasant, taking to the rod and fly, would, in a very short time, have as great a contempt for the "fillet" as old Isaac Walton himself. A few miles from Seix, I passed the entrance to the pretty and fertile valley in which Massat, surrounded by its iron mines and forges, is situated. It is one of the largest and most populous iron manufacturing towns in the Pyrenees.

Near St. Girons, the valley of the Castillionaise unites with that of the Sallat, and the country assumes the delightful character which a rich and productive soil, broken into gentle swells and undulations, covered with orchards and vineyards, with copses and hamlets, can bestow upon it. St. Girons is situated at the junction of the Lezard with the Sallat, in the middle of a country teeming with plenty, and is an industrious and thriving little town.

I arrived in St. Girons just in time to secure the coupé of the diligence for my dog and myself, change my wet clothes for dry, and leave the place for St. Martory. The dog followed me into the vehicle as if he had been quite accus-

tomed to travelling, laid himself down underneath the seat, and did not display that inquisitive propensity which untravelled dogs generally have, to stare out of the windows.

At a short distance from St. Girons, upon the east bank of the river, and built upon a noble platform which overhangs it, is the ancient archiepiscopal town of St. Lizier. It was, at one period, the capital of the district, and the whole of the adjacent country belonged to it; it is now shorn of its ancient rights and grandeur, dwindled into insignificance, and has nought to recommend it to the attention of the traveller, but the beauty of its site, and the admirable view which it commands of the mountains. Beyond St. Lizier, the valley increases in width and beauty, until it becomes an extensive plain, interspersed with wooded hillocks, or grassy slopes, and watered by the various tributary streams which flow into the Sallat.

The old chateau of Prat marks the limits of the department of Arriege. We then enter the department of the Haute Garonne, and from the neighbourhood of the little town of Sallies, we have the first peep of that noble river, which,

from its source among the Spanish mountains, at the head of the Valley d'Arran, until it reaches the Atlantic, after a course of a hundred and forty leagues, presents along its banks so many scenes of savage wildness, sublimity, and grandeur, ere it forsakes the Pyreneés; when, as if suiting its character to the districts through which it flows, it no longer dashes along in all the uncontrolled turbulence of a mountain-river, but, gently and silently steals through the sunny plains, and laves the vine-clad hills of Guienne and Gascony. At St. Martory, I left the diligence, which proceeded to Toulouse; and waited for that which, at a very early hour next morning, passed through the place, on its way from Toulouse to Luchon.

St. Martory, like most of the towns in the district which extends from Narbonne by Toulouse, along the outports of the Pyreneés, boasts of its Roman origin, and has furnished its quota of antique busts and bas-reliefs to the collection of the academy of Toulouse. I was fortunate in procuring places in the diligence from Toulouse, and, by day-break, Cæsar and I were en route for Bagneres de Luchon.

Upon an isolated monticule, within a short

distance of St. Gauden, and upon the right bank of the river, are the ruins of the Chateau de Montespan, almost hid among the wood which surrounds them. It was in this chateau, so distant from Paris, that the husband of the artful woman who had undermined the influence of the beautiful and gentle La Valliere, lived in seclusion and retirement; whilst the haughty favourite exulted in the success of her guilty ambition, and ruled over the most depraved court which ever existed.

Nothing can be more agreeable than the appearance of the country between St. Martory and the entrance to the valley of Luchon. It is, perhaps, the most beautiful plain which the Garonne waters in its course, the most fertile and productive, and containing the most delightful sites any where to be met with. There is no monotony in its features, for its surface is diversified by myriads of the most lovely wooded or verdant knolls, as various in their forms as in their numbers, and crowned with the ruins of ancient castles, or the prosperous villages of the district.

St. Gaudens is said to have derived its name

one of the worthies who, in 470, fell a sacrifice to the bigotry of the fierce, valiant Euric, the champion of Arianism; less illustrious than his son Alaric, who put an end to the persecutions which his father had so signally encouraged, but who perished young and regretted by the hand of Clovis, upon the fatal field of Vonglé.

At La Broquere, we again encountered the Garonne, which we had quitted at St. Gaudens. This river, after in vain endeavouring to follow the course, which, from its source until its junction with the Neste, it seems as if it had been intent upon pursuing, turns suddenly to the east. When it unites with that stream, near Montrejeau, and flows towards Toulouse; where, as if regretting its deviation from its original intention, it returns to the west, which it follows for the remainder of its course.

The valley of Luchon may be divided into three sections, all different in their characters. The first, that from Montrejeau to Cierp, is open, rich, and highly cultivated. The second, that from Cierp to Luchon, is more confined; the mountains which skirt it become lofty; and the traveller perceives, that every step which he

advances, is conveying him into scenes more picturesque than those which he has passed through, and increasing in boldness and grandeur; the summits of the high central range are to be seen peering into the clouds, and, if he has that love of the wilds which I have, he will again exult in the near prospect of exploring their recesses. The third part of the valley, that from Luchon to Venasque, is a series of gorges, ravines, pasturages, and woods, until the snowy range from which the Pique derives its source, separates the two countries.

As the diligence mounted slowly the steep ascents in which the road through the valley of Luchon abounds, I walked alongside of a lady and gentleman who had, for the first time in their lives, visited the Pyreneés. I was greatly amused with their remarks upon the appearance of the valley. The plains of Languedoc had hitherto been the objects of their contemplation, the corn-fields and the vineyards, the sluggish river and the fishponds, formed the scenery with which all their ideas of the picturesque were associated. The mountain, with its tapestry of wood; the enormous rocks which overhung the

road, threatening to annihilate them by their fall; the river, pent up within its narrow course, and foaming with wrath at its detention; the thundering cascade; and the villages perched among the heights, where their roads seemed but a pathway of a span's breadth—were, to my companions, features as strange and wonderful as they were novel and delightful.

One of the most remarkable places in this valley,—or, rather, at the entrance to this valley, —is St. Bertrand, which is built upon a conical height upon the right bank of the river. This town, and its ancient cathedral, merit highly the traveller's notice. But, as my visit to it was upon another occasion, I shall, for the present, defer giving an account of it.

There are two considerable valleys which open into that of Luchon. The valley of Barousse is that which stretches away to the south-east of St. Bertrand, and through which flows the little river of Ourse. It is one of the most populous, but least interesting, lateral valleys of the district. There are considerable forests in it, and marble quarries; but, from its isolated situation, or, rather, from the circumstance that it lies be-

tween the two general routes from Luchon to Bagneres de Bigorre, it is hardly ever visited by strangers, and has even been overlooked by the best geologists of the Pyreneés, although it possesses some formations which ought to have drawn their attention.

The other great valley which opens into that of Luchon does so in the vicinity of the village of Cierp. It is sometimes styled the valley of the Garonne, but, more frequently, the valley d'Arran, and there is scarcely another valley in the Pyreneés which can boast of so much beauty, or which will afford so much pleasure to those who may explore its solitudes.

From Cierp to Luchon the valley is lovely and delightful; irrigated pastures, corn-fields, and hamlets embowered in wood, hang upon the mountain-steeps. Industry, waging war with the obstacles which oppose her progress, has conquered them; and here, as elsewhere among these mountains, she has bordered their bases with a fringe of green and gold; the yellow corn, waving wherever sufficient soil could be scraped together to cover the seed, or the peasant find footing secure enough to enable him to hoe it.

The village, or rather town, of Luchon,—for it is one of the largest watering-places in the Pyreneés,—is situated in an amphitheatre formed by the junction of several of the smaller diverging valleys with that which bears its name. The basin is of considerable extent, inclosing some of the most luxuriant prairies any where to be seen, and the mountains rising from it are of very considerable elevation, some of them attaining a height of eight or nine hundred toises, studded with villages and hamlets, many of which, such as Juset and Montauban, are most picturesquely situated.

The diligence drove into the court-yard of the Hotel de France, and was instantly surrounded by a variety of claimants upon the notice of the victims of their persecution. One set of half-clad, dirty-looking fellows, beat up recruits for the respective inns at which they officiated as decrotteurs, and shoved their half French, half-English, hotel cards into your hands, if you would take them, or into your pocket if you refused. Another most importunate class, insisted upon conducting you to the best lodgings in the place, where each window was said to pos-

sess the most charming and enchanting view; but which, in all probability, looked into a court-yard, or upon the bustling *Place*. Such tormentors *could* be shaken off; but there was a third class, of most insinuating manners, and prepossessing appearance, which it was not such an easy matter to turn aside from, or to address with the usual "Allez vous en." These were the smartly-dressed, sprightly-looking peasant-girls, who wished to know if Monsieur would employ them in washing his linens. Undoubtedly, many will find this a most trying situation to be placed in, especially those who have a general wish to oblige the whole sex; and, still more disagreeable will it be to those who would not, for the world, be the unhappy cause of strife or contention, among a host of pretty mountaineers; and, as I happened to be one of those who would avoid this cruelty, I acted the part of the most consummate politician, accepted the services of every fair blanchisseuse who tendered them, pleased all, and created no jealousy; but, perfectly uncertain in what quarter of the town I should take up my quarters, of course I could not tell them where to find "Monsieur's linens."

In the court-yard of the hotel, I found a friend waiting for me whom I had expected to meet; and we set out together to look for lodgings. Unwilling to take my dog through the various houses which, in our search, we might visit, I tied him up in the stable and left him. We walked over a considerable part of the town, and at last arrived at the apartments which my friend occupied, and where I resolved also to establish myself.

We had been gone from the hotel for, perhaps, an hour, when there was a violent scraping at the door of the room in which we were; and, upon opening it, my dog, in an ecstasy of delight, bounded in. He had ate through the cord by which I had attached him to the manger of the stable, tracked me over the town, and through all the places in which I had been, until, arriving at the house in which he found me, he had waited until the street door was opened, and had then discovered me in one of its most distant apartments. This displayed some stretch of sagacity and instinct upon the part of an animal which was only sixteen months old, and had never been in Luchon, or, indeed, in any town, in its life

before. Since then, he and I have travelled not a few hundred leagues together, and time has not failed to increase our mutual affection.*

Luchon is, without exception, one of the most agreeable watering places in the Pyreneés, its advantages over many of its rivals in fame and beauty are great. From its size, you are not thrown into such immediate contact with the infirm in health, nor elbowed by the more disagreeable frequenters of these places, the unfortunate and miserable creatures who stray thither for the purpose of killing—neither izards nor bears, but to them a still more deadly enemy—time; and who may be seen spurring the overwrought ponies of the place, along its walks and avenues, or "Lazy Lawrence" like, dozing over a stile, inwardly cursing such vulgar sights as mountains, woods, and rivers are, when compared with the enjoyments of the Palais Royal of the

* Cæsar has now become a useful member of his master's family; does duty as pony to his children, acts the part of the most excellent watch-dog in guarding his property; and belies the statement, that the Pyrenean dogs lose their natural vivacity and qualities, and degenerate in character, when taken from their native mountains.

metropolis, the Allées de Tourny of Bordeaux, or the ramparts of Toulouse.

In the height of the season, which is from June until the end of September, there are frequently above a thousand strangers in the little town, where the accommodation is equal to that of its rivals, and certainly not more expensive. The greater part of its visitors are those whom the summer heats have driven from Toulouse, and the southern districts, and consist of all those whose circumstances will permit them to leave home and enjoy the coolness of the mountain air.

The baths are extensive and well arranged. The warm springs have been long known and celebrated for their medicinal properties, and are taken both internally and externally. They are said to be efficacious in chronic rheumatisms, paralysis, catarrh, and various other disorders; when drank, they are taken either pure or mixed with milk; there are also sudatories attached to the establishment, which are heated by the waters of the warm springs which flow through them. In these stew-pots the air is so hot and suffocatingly thick, that these vapour baths are

not in general favour, and those persons who do use them, cannot remain in them above a quarter of an hour.

The springs are some distance from the baths, and are brought underground to them; they emit a smell resembling musty eggs, their taste is flat, and the action of the air, heat, and light decomposes the waters, and renders them of a milky appearance, affording a most convincing proof, that if any benefit is expected to be derived from their use, they ought to be taken at the spot where they issue from the rock, and that even conveying them in covered tanks or pipes must deteriorate their qualities. Handsome baths, and elegant fountains may tend to overcome the repugnance to the use of the waters, but they ought not, as is too frequently the case, to be erected in situations chosen more with a view to adorn the town, than to preserve the intrinsic characters of the waters. The Latin inscriptions which abound, attest that the waters were known and used by the Romans.

The restaurants of Luchon are superior to any in the Pyreneés, and the tables d'hôte are more fully attended. Their charges are not more than

sixty or seventy francs a month, and for that sum they provide a dejeuner à la fourchette, and dinner, both equally well supplied. Single travellers, and those who either from habit or indifference can eat their dinners without being disgusted by the greedy, guzzling system which too frequently pervades a French table d'hôte, cannot do better than resort to these places; and if they will permit me, I will here beg leave to recommend to their special attention the Hotel de Commerce; and as my simple recommendation and testimony to the excellence of its "cuisine," may not be sufficient to entice strangers to bestow upon it their "*custom*," I cannot do better than allow the worthy Maitre d'Hotel to become his own trumpeter, by presenting a fac simile of his hotel card, which at once determined us to give him our patronage, and which no doubt will lead all other Englishmen to follow our example.

Hotel de Commerce.

BAGNERES DE LUCHON.

Perret, of Paris head Cook to Lord Beverly for several years has, the honor to, inform the English that his Hotel has in général been, patronizet by their, nation, and he assures them that no exertion shall be wanting on, his part to merit, a, continuance of the reputation his Establishment, has for its cleanliness and wholesomeness, and hé respect fully solicits the patronage of the English visitors.

Luchon may be fixed upon as a central point, from which excursions may be made to the summits of some of the most magnificent mountains, and into many of the most interesting valleys of the Pyreneés. I remained at Luchon several days, and intruded upon the solitude of many of its dusky forests and wild fastnesses, enchanted with some, and delighted with all. The less

interesting of these expeditions I shall pass over, and confine my narrative to those which pleased me most. I was now no longer a solitary traveller, no longer a pedestrian, for my rambles in this neighbourhood were taken in the company of two friends, pleasant, sociable, and amusing, who had no aversion to walking, on the contrary they preferred it, but they were in the unfortunate predicament of possessing a spirit which was willing but a body which was weak. One of our first excursions was to the Val de Lys, which from its proximity to Luchon, and the possibility of its being reached on horseback, is the most frequent resort of the idlers and convalescents of the watering place. The path which leads to the Lys, passes by the foot of the monticule upon the summit of which are the remains of the Castel Vieil, which in olden times had been built to defend the entrance to the valley of Luchon, by the Ports of the Portillon and Venasque, and whose decayed walls and crumbling ramparts, were, during the late war, deemed worthy of being crowned with cannon. The invalids of Luchon, those who are not able to take the longer journey to the Val de Lys, flock

here in numbers, where if a charming view of the basin of Luchon and the dark woods and mountains of the Birbe, and invigorating air, can conduce to the recovery of health, they may enjoy them to their heart's content. After an hour's slow marching along the banks of the river, the wood so inclosing the path as completely to exclude the rays of the sun, and render it a delightful promenade in the extreme heats of summer, we entered a very narrow and precipitous defile, within which is the little valley of the Lys. It is the valley of Aulus upon a smaller scale: Aulus is the portrait, Lys the miniature, and both are equally worthy of admiration; all the beauties of Aulus are drawn together and concentrated within the high mountain which incloses this Arcadia of Luchon. Flowers of every description deck its verdant meadows, and tinge the masses of dark rock which have rolled from the mountains into it. Single trees of great age and size, are, park like, scattered through its little plain, while its limits are fringed with wood, and bounded by the mountain steeps, and wherever there is sufficient slope to retain as

much soil as will afford nourishment to a tree, a bush, or a wild flower, the nakedness of the dark walls are hidden under the most exquisite variety of foliage. The sycamore, the beech, the oak, the lime, the elder, the dwarf elm, the ash, the hawthorn, the hazel, the maple, the lilac, the service tree, and a profusion of lilies, from which the valley derives its name, blended together, cover the slopes, and creep along the cliffs, the trees decreasing in size as they approach the colder regions, where the dark pine of hardier growth has no rivals of the forest, but in solitary grandeur reigns among their wilds. The beauty of this little valley is greatly enhanced by the numerous torrents, which, born among the glaciers of the Carbious, form a circle of cascades round it; in some places, shooting over its perpendicular walls, the volume of water ere it has reached the valley, has become a sheet of thin spray, brilliant in colour when the rays of the sun strike upon it, and noiseless in its fall; in others, the stream, hopping as it were from shelf to shelf, now dashes over a ledge of rock in sounding turbulence, now disappears among the foliage of the

trees or bushes, until, issuing again with collected force, it springs from the crest of some lower platform into the valley.

The Ports d'Estaous and Viel, at the extreme source of the Val de Lys, are reached after surmounting the barriers which inclose it, by passing the little lake of Estaous, and through the Alpine scenes of glaciers and sterile mountains which border the deep ravines which lead to the summits of the central ridge. The Port de Viel, although difficult and dangerous, and impassable for the greater part of the season, is yet at times the path which the adventurous contrabandier makes choice of, to elude the vigilance of the douaniers, with his mules laden with wool. The simple minded mountaineers who tend their flocks for a few weeks of the season in the neighbourhood of the Carbious, are impressed with the idea, that quantities of gold and silver are inclosed within its glaciers; they have frequently attempted to search for these hidden treasures, and have upon more than one occasion perished in the attempt. These peasants, when unsuccessful in attaining any of the objects of their hopes or

wishes, and when they soliloquize over their disappointments, never ascribe their lot to the wisdom or justice of the Almighty, but unmercifully lay the whole of their bad luck to the shameful and unwarranted interference of the devil.

Another of the many objects of curiosity and mountain grandeur in the vicinity of Luchon, are the lakes of Seculejo and Espingo. The route to these lakes is through the valley of Larboust, passing the little chapel of St. Aventin, whose traditionary history, and the marvellous powers of the saint whose name it bears, are said to be very extraordinary. They were told me by one of the guides, but it so happened, that during the time he was relating the wonders to me, I was so intent upon watching the issue of a fierce battle in the air between a vulture and an eagle, a sight that is rarely seen, and admiring the evolutions of the birds, and the tactics they displayed in the contest, that the miracles of St. Aventin have either escaped my memory, or at most left but a dreamy impression behind.

At the village of Oo, the path strikes into the

small pastoral valley of Lasto, and follows the course of its stream until it reaches its limits, where a wall of delabré looking rock, with a considerable body of water tumbling over it, incloses it. This, apparently at first, insurmountable obstacle for equestrians, is passed without difficulty, by clambering up the channels of various little rivulets, and winding among the ledges, where the most difficult parts of the path have been formed by the inhabitants of the commune, who exact a toll upon every person who visits the lakes. By means of this passage, another little valley, or rather ravine is arrived at, through which the waters from the lakes brawl in noisy turbulence among the fallen blocks of granite which impede their course. A circular mass of dark mountains hem in the upper part of this ravine, and in the hollow at their base is the Seculejo. The lake is not large, what in England would be called a mountain tarn, but a wild and savage spot.

Inclosed on all sides, excepting where its water find an egress by precipices, whose dark walls and high summits exclude the sun and

light, it is a scene of silence and solitude, a lonely and secluded place, its stillness only broken by the rushing noise of the cataract (which from a height of nearly one thousand feet, falls into the lake), the whooping of the eagle, or the scream of the vulture, as they sweep across its waters, or, alas! for the harmony of the scene! the noisy laughter of the gay monde from Luchon. The commune of the Oo, have built a hut upon the banks of the lake, and here the toll is collected from those who visit it; a piece of imposition which has no parallel among the Pyreneés, and at variance with the general conduct of the French, who justly pride themselves upon the freedom of admission in their country, to all places of interest. The platform from which the cascade falls, can only be reached on foot by a steep path, called the Escala; from this platform a narrow gorge leads to the foot of another tier of rock, above which are the two small lakes of the Espingo. The vicinity of these lakes is still more savage and dreary than the Seculejo; the central ridge towers above them where the two ports of Portillon and Oo are separated by the Montarque, and at the base of

this mountain is the lake called Selh de la Baque, one of the few lakes in the Pyreneés which are always covered with ice. Here commence the glaciers, which extend from the Port d'Oo to the Crabioules, and cover a surface nearly equal to those of the Maladetta.

By the Port d'Oo it is possible to cross the frontier to the Spanish village of Venasque, and to one habituated to the mountains, it is a fatiguing, but not impossible day's journey from Luchon, it is not, however, a path frequented by chasseurs or contrabandiers, much less used as a means of transit betwixt the two countries. The environs of the lake d'Espingo, the icy Baque, the Port d'Oo, the little lake de Neré, the gorge of Esquierry, and the Seculejo, abound in the most beautiful and rare plants of the Pyreneés, the gorge d'Esquierry in particular, which has been styled the Flore des Pyreneés.

Before leaving the borders of the Seculejo upon the day which we visited it, the rain came down in torrents, and we were thoroughly drenched and shivering with cold before we reached Luchon ; but the repast which M. Perret bestowed upon us after our arrival consoled us

for our ducking, and the bowl of exquisite punch which Meg Merrillies (as we styled the huge raw-boned, naked-armed barmaid) brought enveloped in flames to our lodgings afterwards, *breathed* defiance to both colds and rheumatisms.

CHAPTER XII.

Expedition to the Port of Venasque—Hospital of Luchon—Douaniers—French Intervention in the Spanish Quarrel, and its Consequences—Magnificence of the Port of Venasque—Extraordinary appearance of the Mist—The Maladetta—Avalanches—Loss of a Guide—Hints to those who would climb the Maladetta—Famous Trou de Toro—Ports de Picade and Pomerou—Spanish Valley of the Artique Telline—Anxiety of the Christino Shepherds—Ouil de Goneou—Source of the Garonne—Quantity of Timber—Valley d'Arran—Disagreeable Situation—Village of Bososte—Terror of the Peasantry—Spanish Old Woman—Miseries of Civil War.

THE aspect of the morning being rather unpropitious, we delayed setting out upon our expedition to the Port de Venasque until the forenoon, the clouds then began to clear away, and we lost not a moment in taking advantage of

the favourable but uncertain weather. A two hours' ride along the banks of the Pique brought us to the Hospital of Luchon. This building is what in Scotland would be called a shealing, one half of which is devoted to the accommodation of travellers, the other used as the permanent residence of a strong party of douaniers, who are stationed here to prevent smuggling upon a district of the frontier upon which it is next to impossible to do so effectually. The Ports by which the contrabandiers can pass from one country to another are nearly as numerous as there are douaniers to guard them; and, as these officers dare not attempt to cross the path of the contrabandiers, unless when secure of establishing their authority by force, which they can only do when several of them are in company, it follows that more than one half of the ports are always unguarded.

Great complaints have been made against the French government on account of the quantities of stores which have been conveyed to the partizans of Don Carlos, through the Pyreneés; and the authorities of that country have even been accused of conniving at the infraction of the law.

There never has been cause for such complaints; and such insinuations are most unfounded. Every one who has visited the wilds of the Pyreneés must be perfectly sensible of the impossibility of completely preventing smuggling upon the frontiers of the two countries. The whole troops of France could not, supposing they were stationed along the frontier of Spain, be an adequate security. Hundreds of the paths among these mountains are known only to the natives, or to those engaged in the illegal traffic. Soldiers and douaniers may be posted in the valleys and outlets; but they cannot be quartered upon the mountains and among the precipices. They may keep a tolerable sharp look out so long as daylight permits them to see about them; but, when night comes, and the contrabandiers are at their work, the soldiers and douaniers must return to their quarters in the valleys. They might as well search for a needle in a hay-stack, and with as much probability of their finding it, as endeavour to hunt the smugglers of the Pyreneés in the dark: and the utmost that the French government can, under such circumstances, and using the greatest possible vigilance, be expected to

accomplish, must be merely to increase the dangers of his trade, by throwing a few additional obstacles in the way of the contrabandier; but, not diminishing its profits, the inducements to smuggle are still the same as before, and increased difficulties can be overcome by increased exertion. Don Carlos *must* receive supplies from France; and, so long as he has money to pay for them, he will continue to do so. The additional restrictions of the French government, and the vigilance of their douaniers, may indeed raise the price of his necessaries, and thus occasion his resources to disappear the sooner; but, so long as he can afford to pay the contrabandiers of the Pyrenees, they will work for him, and supply his wants; nay more, if they have faith in his success, they will, and can, give him credit.

There is another cause which greatly favours Don Carlos in drawing supplies from France; it is, the universal discontent which prevails throughout the whole of the French frontier departments, induced by the stagnation of the commerce which they carried on with Spain. In many districts, the Spanish wool was bought in great quantities, manufactured into cloth in France, and re-sold in

Spain. Thousands of mules, not only those bred by the peasants in the Pyrenean districts, but from Poitou, and other central departments, were annually exported into Spain. These, as well as many other sources of profit to the French inhabitant, are now, by reason of the present war, drained up; but, as those individuals thrown out of employment cannot live on air, numbers of them are reduced to earn their bread illegally, who, previous to the disturbed state of the adjacent provinces, were honest and industrious members of the community.

Some of the precautionary measures adopted by their government have also given great annoyance and offence, particularly to one class of the French peasantry, those who were chasseurs, either from delighting in the sport, or with a view to profit. The cause of this annoyance was a late order issued by the government, prohibiting the sale of a single ounce of powder in the Pyrenean departments, unless the buyer produced a permit, written upon stamped paper, and signed both by the Maire and the Prefet, authorizing him to purchase it. Even when possessed of this order, the chasseur could not purchase more

than half a pound at one time; so that he was obliged to come down from the mountains, lose his time, the fine weather, and his sport, to buy another half pound of powder. This harsh measure nearly drove the mountaineers into rebellion; many of whom complained, that, since all the commerce upon the frontier had already been destroyed, and with it the means of subsistence, that it was hard that they should be almost prohibited from gaining a livelihood by the only honest means which was left to them, the chase; and the poor fellows have expressed more gratitude when I have given them the contents of my powder-flask, than if I had given them ten times its value in money. When I wished to purchase a quantity of powder, I applied to a few friends, who, having all petitioned the authorities for permission to purchase the permitted half-pound, and received the necessary orders, I carried the whole, sometimes a dozen, to the gun-maker, and could then buy as many half-pounds of powder.

It must, therefore, be apparent, that the French government have endeavoured to prevent Don Carlos from drawing supplies from their territory, by adopting the most severe measures by which

they could hope to effect their object; and have done so, by the sacrifice of the commerce of the Pyrenean departments, and causing poverty and dissatisfaction among their inhabitants.

The hospital of Luchon has been most judiciously placed, so as to command a view of the gorges which lead, the one upon the left of the building to the Port de Picade, the other in front of it to the Port de Venasque; and down either of which all those legally employed in the traffic between the two countries must pass. This advantageous position is a source of great comfort to the douaniers, an old one of whom I espied upon our arrival, at the door of the house, with his spy-glass at his eye, watching the entrance to the defile.

Towards the head of the gorge we overtook a string of mules laden with bread, destined for the Spanish garrison in the Port of Venasque, should it not have the bad fortune to meet a few hungry Carlists in its way there. The ascent was neither difficult nor tedious, until we reached the upper part of the gorge; where at a short distance from the circular wall of rock which incloses it, it would require an expert eye to discover any pathway

sufficiently broad for the mules and horses to tread upon. But here, as elsewhere, where man finds it his interest to overcome such obstacles, he has succeeded. The path crossing to the left bank of the ravine, is, with the usual facilities which the water channels afford, aided by built ledges in those places where it skirts the edge of the rock, carried in a zigzag direction to the platform above the gorge, everywhere steep and fatiguing for the horses, but safe and practicable to the most timorously disposed person. To those who cannot walk, to be able to ride to the Port of Venasque, must be a great luxury; to me it was quite the contrary. The hired ponies of the watering places are not always mountain-bred; in which case, the rider is too much occupied in taking care of the animal under him, whose blunders might give him an ugly fall, to enjoy the scenery among which he is scrambling. I, therefore, very soon dismounted, and left my horse to take care of himself, satisfied that he could not wander from the narrow path, and that should he loiter, he would be driven on by the rest of the party, who were some distance behind me.

When we left the Hospital, heavy clouds of mist hung upon all the high summits, and more particularly upon those in the vicinity of the Port; but, as it is frequently the case, that this appearance is confined to particular regions, above which the atmosphere again becomes clear and pure, we did not on that account delay proceeding. Having accomplished the ascent of the first staircase from the valley, the path leads over a series of low summits, which lie between it and the last, whose landing-place is the Port. The mists were here so very intense, that my hopes of getting above them, or of their clearing away, began to decline. Fortunately, the wind freshened; and then, although we did not see all that was to be seen in this part of the ascent, still we were more than recompensed by having that which we did see exhibited to us in a peculiar manner, which had a strange but splendid effect. The mist, broken by the wind, came sweeping over our heads, sometimes enveloping us in darkness, sometimes exposing the blue sky, and a part of the mountains. Section after section of the bald and towering masses which rose above the path were displayed to us one after another,

as if the whole had been a sight too great for us to look upon. Sometimes the clouds opened, and the snows, sparkling in the sunbeams, were before us; at others, an enormous peak of the mountain would shoot its dark head through the mist, and, without visible support, seem as if it were about to fall upon us. Again, when we imagined ourselves hemmed in on all sides by the mountains, and within a few feet of their rugged sides, a passing breeze would disclose the dark waters of the lakes hundreds of feet beneath us.

Thus the effect of light and darkness, of sunshine and of mist, working upon materials of such grandeur as those near the Port of Venasque, was a sight well worthy of admiration, and one which is rarely to be seen. A considerable quantity of snow had fallen during the preceding day; but, from the number of peasants who pass this Port, it seldom happens, excepting in the severe weather of winter, that the path is blocked up. Each muleteer carries along with him a pick-axe and wooden shovel, with which he very soon cuts a way for himself through the snow wreaths, and this being repeated by those who follow, the snow has seldom time to accumulate.

Several lakes are situated in the hollows among the various summits which border the path; but, from seeing them in the imperfect manner in which I did, I can form no estimate of their extent. They cannot, however, be very large, mere reservoirs for the waters of the snow wreaths, which, undeserving of the name of glaciers, yet remain all the year round protected from the sun and wind in the deep ravines and gorges.

Another staircase, similar to the last, but, if possible, still steeper, and rendered slippery by the melting snow, is ascended before arriving at the base of the high ridge of rock in which is the Port of Venasque. The Port is formed by a narrow slit in this wall of rock, so narrow and confined, that it almost would have been possible to have supposed it the work of man if a glance at the immense height of the rocks through which it leads did not convince us that nature alone had opened up the passage.

Excepting the intervals of light which the gusts of wind, by dispersing the mists, had bestowed upon us, we had hitherto, comparatively speaking, been shrouded in darkness, particularly for the ten minutes preceding our arrival at the

Port; my astonishment may therefore be imagined when, the instant that I stepped beyond the limits of the Port, I stood in the purest atmosphere—not a particle of mist, not even a cloud, was perceptible. The phenomenon was curious, and its interest greatly heightened, from the situation in which it took place. The mist, rolling up the valley through which we had passed, was the moment that it could be said to reach the Spanish frontier,—the moment it encircled the edges of the high ridges which separated the countries, thrown back, as it were, indignantly, by a counter current from the Spanish side. The conflicting currents of air, seemingly of equal strength, and unable to overcome each other, carried the mist perpendicularly from the summits of the ridge; and filling up the crevices and fissures in its uneven surface, formed a wall many thousand feet above it, of dark and (from the appearance of solidity which its massive and perpendicular character bestowed upon it) apparently impenetrable matter.

We were glad, indeed, to find the view from the Port so unobstructed. The Maladetta,—in Spanish, The cursed mountain,—the highest of

the Pyreneés, and the most difficult of ascent, rose immediately in front of us, separated from the ridge upon which we stood by a small circular valley, of no great extent. From the Port of Venasque, the Maladetta assumés the appearance of a sugar-loaf, lying at a considerable angle. It is robed in glaciers, excepting near its crest, where the black and craggy rocks which form its highest peaks, rise above the snows. The aspect of the Maladetta from the French frontier, especially when seen from the Port of Venasque, which, from its great height, considerably detracts from the grandeur of the opposite mountain, rather disappointed me. I had seen so many of the great summits of the Pyreneés, so imposing and magnificent in their character, that I could not help picturing in my mind's eye, the Maladetta, the queen of the range from sea to sea, excelling them all in appearance as she does in height. The Maladetta does not do this; still, although she does not stand forth in that dignity and majesty with which, as the loftiest of them all, I had supposed her to be invested, the knowledge of her superiority and height, and the immensity of the glacier which enshrouds the

whole of the northern side of the mountain, are quite sufficient to strike the beholder with admiration; and the view from the Port of Venasque, of the Maladetta, with her silver mantle, the wild valley at her feet, and the ramparts of gigantic precipices which nearly encircle it, the de l'Essera, and the mountains of Catalonia and Arragon, must ever rank high among the most sublime scenery of these mountains.

I regret exceedingly, that I did not see the Maladetta from the Spanish side of the mountain; upon that quarter, it is comparatively free from snow or glacier; and from which, if I might hazard an opinion from what I did see, I should think that its appearance must be far more striking than from the French side. It is there almost insulated from the high summits, which, upon the northern side, crowd around it; and has the full benefit arising from want of rivals. The highest of the summits of the Maladetta,—the pic de Nethon, 1671 toises above the level of the ocean, has never yet been surmounted, notwithstanding that many naturalists have made the attempt; and several of the guides and chasseurs having been lost among the crevices of the

glaciers, no individual has latterly been courageous enough to lead the way.

Formerly, there used to be a shealing near the foot of the Maladetta, but the avalanches being frequent in its neighbourhood, the inmates had for safety removed their lonely dwelling a little further down the mountain to avoid them. A very few months had, however, elapsed, since the removal had been effected, before the new building, with all its inhabitants, was destroyed. An avalanche had broken away from a quarter of the mountain where such catastrophes were unlooked for, and passing over the hut, entombed within it five women and three children. The father of the family was absent when the dreadful accident took place; upon his return from Venasque, he was the first to become aware of the horrid event; nothing remained to mark where his home had stood, but the fatal mass of snow underneath which all that was dear to him was buried; "ne comptant plus sur la terre." Our guide pointed out to us the part of the glacier, where, a few years preceding, a relation of his had perished in one of tis crevices.

Two young mining engineers, M. M. Edouard

Blavier, of Paris, and Edouard de Belly, of Strasbourg, left Luchon upon the tenth of August, 1824, accompanied by Barran (the unfortunate guide who perished) and his son, with the intention of ascending the Maladetta. About six o'clock in the evening, they arrived at the Plaine des Etangs, where they spent the night in a Spanish cabin; most probably that which has since been overwhelmed by the avalanche. At five the next morning, they commenced the ascent with Barran alone, his son being left at the cabin, in charge of the horses. By eight o'clock, they had gained the edge of the glacier, where they breakfasted behind a large piece of rock, to secure themselves against injury from the stones which were continually rolling down the mountain. Barran spoke with confidence of being able to overcome the dangers of the apertures in the snow. Having passed the morain, they put on their crampers, and entered upon the glacier—at some places presenting a surface of ice, in others covered with a coating of soft snow, they sunk above the ankle. They met with no obstacles to arrest their progress, until they arrived within a short distance of the upper edge of the glacier,

where an immense crevice in the ice lay right across their path, into which they gazed with affright by means of holding each other's arms. They could not cross this gulf, so they searched to the left, where the snow had formed an arch over it, for a place secure enough to sustain their weight; but one of the young gentlemen, having sunk his baton to its full length, informed Barran of the circumstance, who advanced still further to the left, and sounded with his own. The snow appeared to him of sufficient solidity to bear his weight; so he placed one foot upon it, and carried the other in advance of it, as far as he could stretch out, believing in this manner to leave the crevice between his legs. The abyss was directly beneath him, and the moment that he endeavoured to make a second step, the snow gave way with the pressure, and poor Barran was engulfed, uttering while he went down the agonizing cries of—"Great God! I am sinking! I am lost! I am drowning!" Destitute of any means whereby to render assistance to the perishing guide, one of the witnesses of this terrible scene, set off as fast as he could to the cabin where Barran's son had been left, to

bring him, and a piece of cord which they had left there.

The same wailing cries were repeated for the space of two minutes; but there was no hope of saving the poor fellow. These two minutes elapsed, and the last exclamations of Barran—"I am sinking"—gurgled through the snows. The miserable witness to this closing scene called in vain upon Barran; he never answered. The horrified young man could no longer remain where he was, and went off to rejoin his companion. They mounted again, with Barran's son and the cord, to the spot where his father was entombed; and they again called upon him, but in vain—the voice of his son could not rouse him.

Persuaded that he was dead, they descended the mountain; and, worn out with fatigue and grief, they reached the cabin at half-past ten at night, where they lost no time in sending information of the catastrophe to Barran's other sons; who, at five in the morning, arrived from Luchon with men and cords. Conducted by their younger brother, they ascended the Maladetta, to attempt, if possible, to recover the body of their

unhappy parent. The three brothers arrived at the fissure; when they were convinced of the death of their father, who did not respond to their cries, and of the impossibility of extricating his corpse which was sunk in the water with which the bottom of the cavity was filled.

Ever since this melancholy event, the guides of Luchon have disliked the idea of ascending the Maladetta; and no one has made the attempt from the French side. It was my intention to have endeavoured to reach the summit of this mountain; but I was deterred by the lateness of the season, and more particularly by the recent fall of snow, by which a slight covering would have been spread over the rents and fissures of the glaciers, and their dangers rendered infinitely greater. After a track of fine weather, and in the best season, which would be about the middle of August, I am satisfied, that, with proper precautions, the horrors of the Maladetta might, with no great difficulty, be overcome. It is not known that any human being has ever trod upon the summit of the Maladetta; and, although it may be a foolish ambition to be the first to do so, and the honour not worth the trouble and risk

which might gain it, still there must be considerable pleasure experienced on finding oneself in a situation which has never been that of another, independent of any scientific knowledge which might be acquired upon the occasion. If I have another opportunity, I shall endeavour to ascend the Maladetta: meanwhile, should any adventurous individual attempt before me, I would here offer a few hints for his guidance.

First of all, I would make sure of having good guides. The greater number of those at Luchon will not do; they are too much accustomed to keep to a beaten track to be the best fitted to trace out a new one, when there can be no guidance to them but that experience which a habitude to untrodden paths can alone bestow upon them. I should, however, pick out two or three of the best of them, and provided with a good coil of rope, and provisions for some days, leave Luchon for the Spanish village of Venasque; I should there procure three of the most noted chasseurs who are in the habit of following the izard among the snows of the Maladetta, and with our party increased in number to six or more, I should rest during the night at the foot of

the mountain. By daylight the following morning I should commence the ascent, and as soon as we arrived within the boundaries of the glaciers, I should arrange the party in the following order: the most experienced guides or chasseurs should take the lead, having first passed a twist of the rope round his waist, for I would not have him leaving me, as poor Barran did; the rest of the party should follow in line, a few paces distant from each other, and all secured to the rope. By this simple expedient the dangers of the glaciers would in a great measure be avoided, and should any of our numbers sink in the snow, he could instantly be extricated by those who were either before or behind him. That the whole party should go down together, is a very improbable circumstance, as the fissures and rents in the snow or ice are seldom of great width, and marching in line a few paces distant from each other, we would cover sufficient space to secure a firm footing for at least some of our number, who could then render assistance to the others, and in this manner, I think I should be able to reach the summit of the Maladetta.

The southern sides of the Pyrenean mountains

are in general more steep and rugged than the northern, but as the southern has the great advantage of being almost entirely free from snow at one period of the summer, I should, therefore, ascend the Maladetta from the Spanish side of the mountain, and not, as has always hitherto been the case, by crossing the immense glacier on the French frontier. The ascent of Mont Perdu, which is only a few feet lower than the Maladetta, and many others of the highest of these mountains can only be accomplished from their southern sides.

Upon a shelf of the rock to the right of the entrance to the port of Venasque,* there is a small cross of iron, and by scrambling still higher up the rock above it, a better and more extensive view of the valley de l'Essera and the mountains of Arragon.

From the Port of Venasque we descended into the basin beneath, and crossing it, mounted to the Port de Pomerou, the entrance into the Spanish valley of Artique Telline. This Port is situated where the frontier ridge forms an angle

* Sometimes styled Benasque.

with that which extends towards the Toro, at the base of which mountain, and in the basin which these two ridges and the Maladetta almost encircles, is the famous Trou de Toro, an immense gulf into which the accumulated waters of the surrounding glaciers precipitate themselves. It is affirmed, that the waters which disappear in the Trou de Toro, follow a subterranean course until they again burst forth in the valley of Artique Telline. I see no reason to disbelieve this statement; the mountains which separate the Trou de Toro from the Trou de Goneou, where a volume of water of similar quantity to that which is lost in the Trou de Toro issues, are composed of limestone, which invariably abound in great cavities. If those two volumes of water are actually the same, then the principal source of the Garonne, by a singular accident, is derived from the glaciers of the Maladetta, which is situated in Spain, and separated from France by a very high ridge of mountains.

The Port de Picade, which leads to the Hospital of Venasque, which we had passed in the morning, is almost close to that of the Pomerou, and as we were undecided whether to return to Luchon by it, or in spite of the want of passports,

and the proximity of the Carlists, to visit the valley d'Arran, we chose the vicinity of a fine spring of water situated between the two Ports, as the spot where we should eat our provisions for the day, and in assembled conclave deliberate upon the important subject. The latter route was unanimously agreed upon. The invigorating air of the mountains, the excellence of the viands which Meg Merrilies had carefully provided for us, washed down by the best wine of old Perret's cellar, had elevated the spirits of some of our party (no doubt previously well strung up by the grandeur of the scenery) to a pitch which would have taken a greater host than that which Don Carlos commanded, to have subdued.

"Wi' tipenny we fear nae evil,
Wi' usquebae—we'd face the deevil!"

For myself, one look into the Port de Picade was sufficient to deter me from going that way. There the mist had thickened so as to present an appearance almost as disagreeable to wade through, as would one of the Brunnens of Nassau.

Having finished our dinner and our consultation, we proceeded down the ravine leading into the valley of Artique Telline. The descent was very rugged and steep, and difficult for the horses. One of our party, following my example, was descending on foot, when he stumbled, and spraining his ancle very severely, was obliged to mount again. At the bottom of the ravine, we found a number of Spanish shepherds, who in momentary expectation of a visit from the Carlists, had driven down their flocks from the mountains, and for security were about to proceed nearer home. The poor fellows were in great anxiety, and they inquired if we could give them any intelligence regarding the motions of their enemies, the Carlists, for the inhabitants of the valley d'Arran being almost to a man Christinos, they knew well the fate which awaited them when the Carlists should break into their beautiful valley.

This ravine is one of the three, which, uniting near the spot where the waters lost in the Tron de Tora again make their appearance from the valley of the Artique Telline. Soon after leaving the shepherds, we entered the forest which extends

over the whole of the Artique Telline and its dependent valleys. The situation of the great fountain of the *Ouil*, or Trou de Goneou, is exquisitely beautiful. The forests of ages cover the slopes and heights around the Ouil, and darken the sides of the three upper valleys which unite a little way beneath it. The woodman's axe has not yet been heard to ring among these impenetrable woods, and the trees in size and magnificence are equal to any in the Pyreneés. The path by which we were descending through the forest, made a bend nearly opposite to the fountain, and an opening in the woods gave us a full view of it. The stream that issues from it is by far the most considerable of all the sources de the same nature which exist in these mountains; it becomes at once a considerable river, and at its junction with the streams from the Ports of Pomerou and Vielle, the largest timber can be floated down it. The waters of the Maladetta dart forth from their subterranean canal with the force and velocity which their rapid descent of some thousand feet may be supposed to have inspired them; and as if astonished at the changed character of the scene from that in which they

were born, they break in unbridled fury over the precipices and steeps, form many cataracts, and dashing among the rocks below, water the adjoining woods with the clouds of spray they create. Unfortunately, we were from the length of the ride to Bososte, where we intended to pass the night, and the lateness of the hour, most reluctantly obliged to quit a spot which offered so many inducements to a prolonged stay.

The valley of the Artique Telline is completely pastoral, the banks of its river abounding in the richest meadows, bordered by its great forests, upon which, towards its extremity, the great demand for timber by their French neighbours, is causing the natives to make fearful inroads, fearful, because no prudent measures are adopted to keep up the supply; and the mountains which are once stripped of their woods, have no chance of regaining their former beauty and value, but remain in all the ugliness of an ill cut and decayed forest. The quantity of timber which is yearly floated down the Garonne, from this, and the adjacent districts of the valley d'Arran, must be immense; some idea may be formed of it from the fact, that the river for many miles below the

Hermitage of the Artique was, when we passed along its banks, so encumbered with timber, that though there was sufficient depth of water to float the trees, large as they were, it yet was insufficient to transport the quantity which at so many various points are thrown into it, and the logs had become so wedged together, that it would have been possible to have descended the stream upon the raft formed by them. The trees are felled far up the mountains, and drawn by manual labour down to the water's edge, where, if the stream be already blocked up by the quantity of wood thrown into it, many labourers are set to work at the place where the stoppage has commenced, and by means of separating the logs where they have been jammed together, and huddled one above another, they again shoot away with the stream, jostling and bruising each other on their route, until they are taken out of the river at the depôt, and carted to the saw-mills of Fos and St. Beat, where they are cut into planks, and sent to Toulouse, Marseilles, and other ports.

A very heavy shower came on before we had quitted the Artique Telline, and drove us for

shelter into one of the granaries by the way-side, where we did not remain very long, for the clouds had descended too low to allow us to hope for a change of weather, and our friend who had sprained his ankle, was complaining bitterly of the pain which he was suffering.

The entrance to the valley d'Arran, has in olden times been defended by the Castel Leon, famous in story, built upon some heights on the right bank of the river, and deriving its name from some fancied resemblance which they have to the lord of the forest.

It was now getting late and dark, and we were riding over one of the most broken and uneven paths which can be imagined, exposed to torrents of rain, from which we had nothing to protect us but the thin linen blouzes generally worn by the peasants and by travellers in the summer, so that we were soon as wet as if we had been dragged through the river; the night too had become very cold, so that altogether our situation had become rather an unpleasant one, and would have made no bad caricature of a party of pleasure. Could we have got smartly along the road we should have laughed at such trifles, but our horses were

jaded—perfectly "done up," and stumbling over the inequalities of the road, plainly demonstrated that it would be better to allow them to proceed leisurely than have our necks broken among the rocks, or have the remaining spark of that ardour which flamed so brightly upon the mountains, extinguished by a roll into the river. To add to our miseries, the sprained ankle of our friend had now become so swollen with exertion, and so much more painful, that it was impossible for him to put his horse out of a walk. Thus wet, cold, and hungry, we crawled along, and about three hours after darkness had overtaken us we reached Bososte. Well aware of the scene of confusion in which we should find the village, I had taken the precautionary measure of sending forward one of the guides, to prepare at least a good fire at which to warm our shivering persons, for, as to procuring beds, I had great doubts of our seeing such luxuries. Near the entrance to the village, we found our avant courier waiting for us, who hearing the clattering of our horses' hoofs, hailed us in the darkness, and conducted us through the purlieus of the place to the posada.

We were shown up stairs into a large chamber,

lit up with a fire corresponding in size to its dimensions, and blazing most cheerfully. As we had expected, we found the inmates of the house, as well as the whole inhabitants of the village, in a state of great anxiety and distress, in hourly expectation of the Carlists breaking into the valley; the inhabitants of which, as I have already mentioned, being to a man in the interest of the Queen, they had little to hope from their clemency, and every thing to fear from the "no quarter" warfare of their enemies.

The young men of the valley were out in the mountains opposing the Carlists, but from the accounts brought in, had been outnumbered, and forced to retire, and all those who were not actually engaged in the defence of the district, were busily employed in depositing their worldly goods in places of safety, or transporting them to the village of Fos, upon the French frontier, to which the greater part of the inhabitants intended emigrating on the morrow. The inmates of the posada, whose relations were among those who were fighting, conscious that in the event of their defeat, the burning brand would be applied to their dwellings, determined to leave nothing but

its walls to the vengeance of the Carlists, had already dismantled their abode of its furniture. Fortunately for us, there still remained three mattresses which were not to be sent off until the following morning, and these we immediately arranged on the floor, as near to the fire as possible. Our lame friend was the first object of attention; the pain from his ankle was so intense, that he could not put his foot to the ground, not even move it without suffering torture. He was laid upon one of the mattresses, and consigned to the care of the old grandmother of the family, who had evinced great sympathy for him since our arrival. This old woman was the most sorrow-stricken looking creature I ever beheld; care, anxiety, and grief had laid such hold upon her, that she seemed imbued with life merely that her limbs might be kept in motion. Her sympathy for our friend was expressed by the immediate kindliness with which she commenced dressing his ankle, and administering to his comfort, which she did in perfect silence, without uttering a word. Having bathed the inflamed limb with decoctions which she thought would reduce the swelling, she bound it up with a roll

of cotton ligature which one of her sons, who was standing by (a fine looking young fellow who had just arrived from the mountains, where he had been engaged with the Carlists) drew from his breast, and which had been intended for his own or his comrades' necessities. Although the poor creature spoke not, yet many a deep sigh, during her work of charity, told that her old heart was nigh bursting with grief; and when I chanced to express my admiration of her son's appearance, she shook her head mournfully, too clearly demonstrating her fear that his manly form might soon be lost to her.

The most perfect stillness reigned throughout the house, it seemed as if death had already entered it; the very children forgot their playful bustle, and crowded around their mother, and every inmate trod as if the creaking of a shoe would have been an outrage.

We obtained a plentiful supply of what provisions the people had, and so kind were they, that the son brought us, from some hidden store, a bottle of the most delicious wine I ever tasted. "It is," said he, "so old that we do not know its age, but we value it very highly, and it is only

given as a restorative to those who are in delicate health."

Long after my companions were enjoying the repose which their tedious journey required, I remained in conversation with the old woman's son, whom I had persuaded to partake of our supper. He told me that the Carlists, incensed at the inhabitants of the valley d'Arran from their declaration in favour of the Queen, were fast approaching to take vengeance upon them. He had already been fighting in Catalonia against them, but had little hope that they should be able to prevent their entrance into his native valley. "When they do come," said he, "we shall then have our houses and our property burnt and destroyed, and they among us who may be taken, will have few minutes left them to repeat their 'Aves.'"* Many of his comrades and relations had perished in the conflicts which had taken place, and the scenes of massacre and butchery which he related as having witnessed, were absolutely horrifying.

* Soon after our departure, the enemy broke into this beautiful valley; upon whose inhabitants, and their property, even more than the wonted savage ferocity of the Carlists was wreaked.

"The wife," said he, "of my most intimate friend, is at present under our roof; her husband was shot a few days ago by the Carlists, and she is still ignorant of the circumstance. She and her little girl, her only child, were sent here for safety, and her husband, who with others had been endeavouring to make head against the enemy, was taken prisoner near his own house, instantly strapped to a tree and shot. We have not dared to tell her all this, and she believes that he has been taken prisoner; but as the Carlists have quitted the district where her home is situated, she leaves this to-morrow to return to it, which she will find in ashes, and become acquainted with her husband's death." While he was telling me this tale of sorrow, the object of it, a young woman apparently not more than twenty years of age, passed through the room, leading her little girl; one of the many thousand unfortunates whose happiness has been blasted by this horrid war.

CHAPTER XIII.

Departure from Bososte—Emigration of the Peasantry—Return into France—Scene with the French Douaniers—St. Beat—Pyrenean marbles—Interesting Town and Cathedral of St. Bertrand—Antiquities—History of St. Bertrand—Cause of its Destruction—Merovingian treachery—Interior of the Cathedral—Curious Paintings—More curious Relics—Incivility of the Priest—Famous Grotto—Lose our way—Village of St. Laurent—Night's Quarters—Flight from them—La Barthe—Its Comforts—Capvern—Castle of Mauvoisin—Abbey of L'Escaledieu.

We slept most comfortably upon our mattresses, undisturbed by the Carlists, or any other intruders until morning, when our guides, anxious for departure, awoke us. The good old woman's kindness had been of considerable service to her patient; her prescriptions had greatly alleviated

the pain which he suffered from his ankle, and her son recommending the use of *spardilles* instead of shoes, he was quite able to resume his journey. Grateful for the extreme kindness which these poor people had shown to us, even in the midst of their own distress, we mounted our horses, and parted from them with that sorrow which a knowledge of the calamities which were soon to fall upon them occasioned.

" Bella " is ever " horrida bella," let the causes which have given rise to it be what they will; whether in defence of our rights, real or supposed, whether to repel foreign aggression or domestic insurrection; still the results are the same. Circumstances may palliate, nay, even excuse an appeal to arms, but the pitying eye of humanity will not, while it gazes upon the harrowing scene of a battle field, seek to divine the causes which have led man to rob his fellow-creature of that animating spirit which he could not give him, or having once taken, return to him, but will regard the effects of warfare—call it ancient or modern, barbarous or civilized—with the same conscious sentiment—that *there* man has usurped a power which does not and cannot belong to

him. Some wars are more miserable in their relations than others; but that war in which father is arrayed against son, and brother against brother in deadly strife, and shedding each other's blood without remorse or pity, can find no parallel. Such in character is the war now raging in the north of Spain, and such the unnatural crimes which the uncurbed ambition of the members of *one single* family can spread over a nation.*

As we passed through the village, we found the greater part of its inhabitants assembled at the residence of the governor of the district; those who were soldiers, waiting for their orders; those who were emigrating to Fos, for their passports. Conspicuous in appearance among the former, was the son of the old woman of the posada, who recognizing his friends of the preceding evening, came forward and shook hands

* Heningsen, in his "Campaign with Zumalacarregui," mentions an affecting anecdote connected with the civil war; I allude to the capture and execution of the commandant of the fortified church of Villafranca. The prisoner's father Ximenes, was the devoted partisan of Don Carlos, "and he saw his eldest and once best beloved son, about to suffer death with the consciousness that he had done his part to bring him to so bitter a punishment."

with us; he was in high spirits, and about to set out with a reinforcement to his party in the mountains, and as I am confident that he would be "foremost in the fight," it would be almost hopeless to expect that he is now alive.

A little stream which flows into the Garonne a few miles below Bososte, is the boundary between the two countries; and at the bridge which crosses it, called the Pont du Roi, the advanced guard of the French troops on the frontier is posted. The guard was composed of the sentry, who challenged us, and three or four soldiers who were sleeping upon the grassy knoll beside him. He challenged us, but made no difficulty in allowing us to enter the French territory, although coming from Spain, and without passports. We did not, however, get off so easily at Fos, where the douaniers demanded our passports, and upon our declaring that we had none, plainly told us that we must return into Spain, from which no individual would be permitted to enter France, who could not produce a passport. This intimation placed us in a somewhat disagreeable situation. To be obliged to return to Bososte to bare walls and empty cupboards was

bad enough in all conscience, but to be forced to steal or to fight our way through the Carlist parties, who ere this, might be in the passes at the head of the valley, was doubly annoying.

We expostulated with the green-coated gentlemen, declared that we had left Luchon the preceding day, appealed to our guides for the truth of our story, but we could not satisfy them; "how were they to be certain of the fact?" I could not help laughing when one of the officers made this remark, for it brought to my recollection the predicament in which a gentleman riding out in the vicinity of Edinburgh, found himself. He had paid at one of the turnpike gates, a ticket from which enables the possessor to pass through all the other gates within a certain district, and carefully, as he imagined, deposited the little passport in his pocket. Arrived at another gate, the keeper demanded his ticket, and the gentleman, pulling up, and putting his hand in his pocket, searched it right and left, diving into every corner of it, but the inch square piece of paper was nowhere to be found. It had flown away, or perhaps in using his pocket-handkerchief it had been blown away; but sure

it was the thing was lost. The gentleman protested that he had paid at such and such a gate, and obtained a ticket; but no, the keeper was not satisfied. The money was of no consequence, but the gentleman was indignant that his word should be doubted; so convinced of the decisive nature of the appeal he was about to make, he raised himself in his stirrups, and staring in the keeper's face said, "Have the kindness, my friend, to look into my countenance, and tell me if you think it the physiognomy of one who, for the paltry sum of twopence, would tell you a lie?" The keeper did as he was desired, and stretching out his hand, answered, "I'll thank you for twopence."

The douaniers seemed to put the same reliance upon our assertions, that we had only left Luchon the preceding day, as the gatekeeper that this gentleman had lost his ticket. The affair began to look serious, and the possibility that we should be turned back, very great. The spot where the altercation took place, was at the entrance to the village of Fos, almost the first house of which is one of "entertainment." Fortunately its signboard caught my eye, and I immediately pro-

posed that we should, instead of standing in the heat upon the road, walk into the auberge, and there consider the matter coolly, which a draught of the host's *best* would probably enable us to do, and at all events, if we had to return, it would be quite as well to part good friends. The proposition was acceded to, and the contents of the host's best cask was put in requisition; the cooling effects were wonderful; a universal cheerfulness prevailed, the circumstance of our detention was forgotten, or the worthy officers had too much politeness to recollect it, but certain it was that we left them to finish the last *litre* bottle of wine, bade them goodbye, remounted our horses, and proceeded down the valley to St. Beat.

The situation of this little town is very picturesque. The portion of the valley d'Arran between Fos and St. Beat, spacious and extremely beautiful and riante, is here almost closed in by the mountains which on each side flank the town. St. Beat has been built in the narrow gorge, where there is scarcely sufficient width for the river and a narrow street of houses, which on either side line the banks; and in many places

the space is so confined, that the under part of the precipices have been scooped out, and houses built under them. In olden times the Spanish possessions in this valley comprised the town and castle of St. Beat, the crumbling walls of which crown an isolated mass of rock situated in the centre of the defile, and completely guarding the entrance to it.

It is a curious circumstance, that both the two great nations which are separated from each other by the Pyreneés, should each of them possess, as it were, a key which admitted them to the territories of their neighbour, through the otherwise impassable districts of these mountains. Thus France possesses nearly one half of the Cerdagne, which lies altogether upon the Spanish side of the Pyreneés, and in the severe weather of winter is almost cut off from the resources of the country of which it forms a portion, but the possession of which, in ancient warfare, gave the French great facilities in invading the finest of the Spanish provinces: Spain, again, by means of the valley d'Arran, could at any time pour its troops through the strongest and most defensible of all the Pyrenean fastnesses. It seems strange

that the commissioners who settled the boundaries between the two countries, did not take this coincidence into consideration, and propose that an exchange should have taken place. The advantages of the concession would have been mutual.

In the vicinity of St. Beat, there are some of the purest statuary marble quarries in the Pyreneés, great blocks of which are transported to all parts of the kingdom. The marbles of these mountains,—at an early period in much estimation, and of which the greater part of the most ancient and exquisitely carved altars of the country are executed,—had fallen into disuse; succeeded by the more rare, but scarcely more beautiful, Italian marbles. This taste for foreign marbles had caused those of the Pyreneés to be almost forgotten; but, latterly, as the French have taken a greater interest in their mountainous departments, their marbles have again become popular. Great expense is incurred in working the quarries; and many *marberies* have been established. That at Bagnerès de Bigorre is well worth visiting; and there specimens of the various marbles found in the Pyreneés can be procured.

The defile of St. Beat opens into the wide plain which forms a portion of the valley of Luchon, and in which the Garonne unites with the Pique. We crossed to the left bank of the river, for the purpose of visiting the remarkable old town and cathedral of St. Bertrand; which, of the many interesting places in the Pyreneés, is perhaps the most deserving of notice, not only by reason of the great beauty of its situation, but from its great antiquity, and the numerous historical incidents connected with it.

Soon after the murder of the high-minded and disinterested Sertorius, the various tribes of which his army had been composed, were defeated and driven out of Spain by the victorious troops of Pompey. That general, preferring the humane expedient of colonizing the scattered bands beyond the Pyreneés, to the barbarous, but more usual system, of extermination, collected them together, and selected the site of the modern St. Bertrand, as that upon which they should build a city, to which he gave the name of Lugdunum. This city was founded sixty-nine years after Christ, and was divided into two parts; the upper occupying the situation of the

present St. Bertrand, the lower, extending around the base of the high monticule upon which it is built. This city became the capital of the Convenæ (the designation given to the people who had built it, and the inhabitants of the surrounding country), and continued to increase in size and importance, until the end of the sixth century, when it was entirely destroyed by Gontran, King of Burgundy.

The circumstances attending the destruction of Lugdunum, and the story of the unhappy individual who was the cause of it, form a melancholy illustration of the treachery and cruelty which desolated France during the period of the Merovingian dynasties.

Gondovald, the son of Chlotaire the First, was the hero of the tragedy. His mother, from her imprudent conduct, was discarded by Chlotaire; and her child, persecuted by his own father, because the boy's uncle, Childebert, King of Paris, having no family, had adopted him as hisheir. This arrangement destroying Chlotaire's ambitious hopes of succeeding his brother in the sovereignty of Paris, Gondovald was at last disowned by him, degraded from his rank as a Merovingian prince,

by having his flowing hair, the prerogative of his birth, cut off, and imprisoned at Cologne. Escaping from Cologne, he fled into Italy, where he was kindly received, and protected by Narses for several years. After Narses' death, he went to Constantinople; where he was received with marked distinction by the Emperor Justinian. The succeeding emperors, Tiberius and Maurice, were equally kind to Gondovald, acknowledging and treating him as the son of a king. During the period of his residence at the court of the emperors, the most profound hatred subsisted between his brothers Chilperic and Gontran, arising from the division of the provinces which, in right, ought to have belonged to Gondovald.

The princes of the kingdom of Austrasia, afraid that their kingdom would become united with that of Burgundy, or Paris, resolved to recall Gondovald from his exile, and to aid him in the recovery of his dominions; as illegitimacy was, in those days, no barrier to the throne, it was sufficient that he was of the blood of Clovis. They accordingly sent ambassadors to Constantinople; who, after much persuasion, prevailed upon Gondovald to enter upon the enterprize.

Plentifully supplied with treasure by the Greek emperor,* he embarked along with the ambassadors, and arrived at Marseilles. Gondovald was there joined by several powerful auxiliaries, and his cause wore every aspect of success. The chief of the ambassadors, however, proved faithless to him, seduced his supporters, and, robbing him of his treasures, fled into Burgundy. Gondovald, however, still prosecuted the enterprize in which he was engaged; and, after having experienced varieties of fortune, after having conquered the countries around Angoulême, Perigeux, Bordeaux, and Toulouse, and taken their capitals, he again became a victim to treachery.

The King of Burgundy corrupted his Austrasian allies, who withdrew themselves from Gondovald's interests, and left him with a far inferior army to contend against that which his brother had sent against him. He was obliged to retreat along the banks of the Garonne, by Agen, until

* In return for this assistance, it was agreed, upon the part of Gondovald, that the coinage of his kingdom should be in the name of the emperor—thus acknowledging him as superior.

he reached Lugdunum. That city, strong in its natural position, upon an isolated summit, and well-fortified, was chosen by him as the scene of his last struggle, for the object the attainment of which had brought him into France. He had still a force under his command quite sufficient to garrison the town, with provisions for several years; and he could not want for water, as there was a fountain within the walls which never failed.

Thus situated, Gondovald might have defied the hosts of Burgundy, and forced them to raise the siege; but he was fated a third time to suffer by the treachery of his allies. The most daring assaults of the besiegers were, for a long time, repelled; and they were driven back with disgrace and slaughter. But the Burgundian gold effected that which its swords could not do. The Duke Bladaste was gained over; who, taking advantage of the confusion occasioned by the rejoicings for the victory which the garrison had gained over the enemy, set fire to the archiepiscopal palace, and escaped to the besieger's camp.

The attack upon the town was renewed next

morning; the efforts of the enemy were redoubled; every stratagem was put in requisition: but without success, and Gondovald was again victorious. The fidelity of Mummole, Governor of Avignon, and the Bishops of Gap and Waddon, his remaining supporters, was not proof against the offers of the besiegers; and they conspired to deliver Gondovald into the hands of his enemies. And, to effect their purpose, they endeavoured to persuade him that his brother Gontran would yet receive him kindly, and forget what had passed between them. They said to him—

"Tu sais quelle fidelité nous t'avons gardée; ecoute maintenant notre conseil: tu a souvent demandé d'être conduit à ton frère; le temps est venu. Nous avons parlé a des serviteurs de Gontran; ils disent que leur roi ne veut point ta perte, parce qu'il n'est resté que peu de rejetons de sa race. Sors donc de la ville; tu ne rencontreras point de perils." Gondovald comprit leur penseé—"Qui m'a tiré de ma retraite?" leur demanda-t-il. "De qui aije ecouté les conseils? Par qui voulais-je régner? C'est en vous, après Dieu, que j'avois mis mon

esperance. Si vous m' avez trompé, Dieu vous en demandera compte, et son jugement sera contre vous." "Notre bouche," repondit Mummole, "n' a point proféré le mensonge. Viens, les hommes de Gontran t' attendent. Sois sans crainte; quitte cependant ce baudrier d'or dont la vue les offenserait."

Simple-minded to the last, or aware that he could not defend the place should Mummole and the Bishops desert him, he yielded to their entreaties to accompany them to the camp of the besiegers. They had scarcely left the city when he was met by his traitor friend, Gontran Boson, the chief of the ambassadors who had brought him from Constantinople, and Ollon, Count of Bourges, who, aware of what was passing within the walls, had come to receive him. Gondovald now perceived that he was a prisoner; and, raising his hands to heaven, "Juge des hommes," s'ecria-t-il, "toi qui n'es que justice et que verité, sois maintenant l'appui de ma cause, et vengemoi des traîtres qui m'ont vendu a mes oppresseurs."

Having uttered these words, he descended the hill; the path is very steep and rapid: and,

when he had arrived at a considerable distance from the gate, Ollon, who followed him, taking advantage of his position, struck Gondovald to the earth, and then endeavoured to stab him with his lance, which the excellence of the cuirass prevented. Gondovald recovered himself, and, sword in hand, endeavoured to regain the town; but the villain Boson, as if to consummate his wickedness, hurled a stone at him, which, striking Gondovald upon the forehead, stunned him. The soldiers then surrounded and murdered him. After having heaped all sorts of indignities upon his body, they tied his feet with cords, and (Achilles like) dragged it with derision round the camp, until satisfied with their brutality, they left the body unburied.

After Gondovald's death, his betrayers carried the treasures out of the town, and the Burgundians entered upon the following day, and sacked and burned it. Not a living thing remained within its walls, and not an edifice was left standing.

Five hundred years elapsed from the period when Lugdunum was destroyed by the soldiers of Burgundy, before it was again inhabited.

Towards the end of the eleventh century, the holy father St. Bertrand, who, from being originally a poor monk of the hermitage of Capadour, among the gorges of the Tourmalet, had, by his piety and sanctity, and the performance of many miracles, acquired great power and authority in the district, chose the site of the ancient Lugdunum as that upon which he should erect the famous cathedral which now bears his name. Devotees flocked to St. Bertrand from all quarters; pilgrimages were made to its shrine from all countries; and, during the superstition of centuries, its altars were as popular, and the relics of its founder as venerated, as those of any other saint in the calendar.

St. Bertrand is, as I have already mentioned, situated upon a remarkable circular hill, which stretches from the higher summits which lie behind it into the plain. Upon this hill, the site of the upper and strongest part of the antique Lugdunum, is the present town; and, at its base, and all through the flat country which extends from it toward the Garonne, are the remains of the city destroyed by Gontran's army. Every field abounds in these ruins, and if an

estimate of the size of the ancient city may be formed from a view of these evidences, it must have been of great size and extent. A circuitous road winds round the hill to the entrance to St. Bertrand, which is defended by strong walls, and massy gates.

We proceeded at once to the most interesting object in the place, its large and towering cathedral. While admiring the front of the cathedral, we were accosted by an individual who addressed us with, "How do you do, *sáárs?*" whom we afterwards discovered to be a half-idiot old soldier, who during his campaigning had picked up the above stock of English, which now served him as an introduction to persons of that nation who might visit the place.

Escorted by this half crazy being, whose remarks upon the various ornaments of the building added not a little to our amusement, if not instruction, we examined the interior of the cathedral. Its aisles are very fine, and the carving of the wood-work which surrounds the choir and the canons' stalls, remarkably well-executed. There are several good paintings; among the number, a series which are intended

to represent the occasions upon which the miracles attributed to Saint Bertrand were wrought.* There is one picture behind the altar in which St. Bertrand is represented as preaching upon a hill side to a few devotees, while the holy father's mule, which has been tied to a tree, is having its tail cut off by some unconverted sinner. This picture, in the estimation of our conductor, was the chef d'œuvre of the collection; and he expatiated at great length upon its character and execution.

After having satisfied our curiosity in the cathedral, we were about to quit it, when we were told that the greatest curiosities which it contained were yet to be shown to us. These curiosities were relics of St. Bertrand, held in profound veneration by the people of the district, and consisted of certain portions of the holy father's wearing apparel. Of course, we expressed much anxiety to look upon such sacred articles; and our conductor knocked at the door of the refectory, to request the father who had

* The character of the paintings of this series is similar to that of those which, in the cathedral of Carlisle, represent the temptations of St. Anthony.

charge of the precious garments, to exhibit them to us. The priest came to the door; and, to our great disappointment, rather snappishly replied, that he was engaged in confessing, and could not show them to us. Now, I had good reason to know that the holy father was not saying what was the case, but put us off with this excuse because he did not wish to show the things to us. The truth was, that my dog had followed me into the church; and fatigued, had very unceremoniously laid himself down upon the matted steps of the altar. The priest, whom I had seen passing through the church, had discovered the intruder; and, at the same time, hearing our suppressed laughter, while contemplating the strange picture behind it, he had determined that such irreligious heretics should not profane the relics of his patron saint by looking upon them; or, perhaps, strongly suspecting that our irreverential eyes might discover in the holy vestments the small clothes of some worthy Friar Tuck, esteemed it safer not to test the strength of our faith.

About a couple of miles to the north of St. Bertrand, is the magnificent grotto of St. Bertrand in the centre of the wooded hill which forms the

promontory between the Nesle and the Garonne. We procured guides and candles at a cottage in the vicinity, and visited it. The entrance is no larger than a fox's earth, and so very narrow that we were obliged to crawl on our hands and knees for several yards, after which it widened so as to permit of our standing upright, and a few paces brought us into one of the finest and most extensive subterranean caverns I ever beheld. The stalactites were beautiful, and the columns and arches formed by them of great size. It seemed as if the whole heart of the mountain had been scooped out, and the interior divided into enormous halls, communicating with each other by Gothic looking doors and passages. Our dozen candles but faintly illuminated the immense caverns through which we passed, and to which there appeared no limits. How long we might have wandered in this grotto, without meeting with any barrier to our progress, it would be impossible to tell, but we walked forward in a tolerably straight direction for at least half an hour, and then we only returned because our time and candles were shortening. All limestone caverns present much the same appearances, but this of

St. Bertrand is upon a grander scale, and more prolific in the varieties of the forms and shapes which its petrifactions and stalactites assume, than any other which I have visited.

Although it was early when we left Bososte, still we had loitered so much upon our way, that it was nearly dark when we emerged from our subterranean expedition. We were undecided where to pass the night; whether to go a little out of our way, and make sure of comfortable quarters at Montrejeau, or, keeping the route to Bagnères until we reached La Barthe, remain there. None of us had passed this way before, so it was left to the guides to decide; and the most noisy, but least useful of them, a native of Bagnères de Bigorre, affecting to know the district best, persuaded us to turn towards La Barthe.

The evenings of the south, mild, cool, and, after the intolerable heats of the day, pleasant and agreeable though they are, are yet destitute of one charm which renders the summer evenings of the north so exquisitely delightful. The Southerns scarcely know what twilight is; if they do, it is but in name, for with them the sun

sets as if he had been performing a toilsome task which he rejoiced at having completed, and having done so, he vanishes as it were without regret, leaving them in darkness. How far otherwise does he leave us in Britain! *there* his is no *sudden death*, but he sets as if in sorrow at parting; the lamp of his glory is not extinguished at once, but its expiring rays wax fainter so gradually and imperceptibly, that at last they may almost be mistaken for the herald streaks of his reappearance.

Upon this occasion the sudden darkness was doubly unwelcome; the guides mistook the path, and became so bewildered among the lanes and fields, and woods, that by the hour when we should have reached La Barthe, we found ourselves still wandering upon the banks of the Nesle. It was then too late to think of proceeding farther, even although our horses could have carried us, which they could not; we, therefore, sought the nearest village, and arrived at St. Laurent.

None of the party were acquainted with the localities of this large and dirty village, so that it was a matter of conjecture as to which of its

narrow lanes led to an auberge. Its inhabitants were all in bed, and when we knocked at their doors to gain information, the only response was the barking of the dogs. As a last resource we separated, and taking different directions dived into the purlieus of the place, trusting that chance would lead some of us to where we would be "taken in." In this manner we explored the lanes, until one of the party having succeeded in finding an auberge, came to tell the others of his success. I remember meeting with this individual, who experienced as great difficulty in finding his way back to the auberge as he had in originally discovering it; and we would have passed it, if some others of the party, who had also discovered the house, had not shouted at their success.

The owner of the auberge having no accommodation in his own house, transferred us to that of his brother in law adjoining, a most unprepossessing looking building. In passing through the court yard, a Pyrenean dog flew upon my friend Cæsar, but after a single rourd finding that he had "caught a Tartar," he wisely withdrew, and allowed us to enter. When the fight commenced

I was about to call my dog off, but the owner of the other prevented me, observing that it would be much better that the animals should become acquainted with each other's strength at first, than have them quarreling and growling the whole night. What he said was perfectly true, for the combatants, as if mutually respecting each other, evinced in their conduct while they were together, the most dignified forbearance.

Supper was cooked at the auberge and brought to us, and our astonishment may be conjectured when we found a capital turkey set before us. As to beds, there were but two in the house, and one of them was in a chamber where some of the family had died a few days before, and it was thought we would not relish sleeping there. Upon examination, however, it turned out that this chamber had two beds in it, and as both of them could not have been occupied by the individual in question, we had no objection to make use of that which had not, and the guides taking possession of the hayloft, we slept soundly enough, considering the character of our quarters.

Daylight the next morning disclosed the

beauties of the place into which we had strayed, and they were certainly of a class nearly corresponding to those of the Andorrian village of Escaldos. To pull on our clothes and be off was really a matter of necessity, and we were not long of accomplishing it.

Half an hour's canter along the banks of the Nesle brought us to La Barthe, whose auberge, as remarkable for its comfort and cleanliness as the house in which we had passed the night had been for the opposite qualities, caused us doubly to regret the bad fortune of the preceding evening. To add to the satisfaction which the sight of this cheerful looking little inn gave us, we found such a breakfast preparing in the cuisine as would have delighted the most fastidious taste. A couple of gorgeous ducks, and a prime little round of veal were revolving slowly and sadly upon the spit, as they received the finishing decorations from the hands of as tidy a looking Phillis as ever spoilt her beauty in the heated atmosphere of a kitchen. Had the good people been expecting us for weeks, they could not have entertained us better than they did, or provided more liberally for our craving appetites.

Should any of my readers ever pass through La Barthe, he may feel certain of being well received at the house I speak of, obtaining an excellent breakfast or dinner, and a bed whose comforts would tempt even an unwearied traveller to sleep. I know neither the name of the people nor the designation of the inn, but I can mention one landmark by which it will be easily discovered, which has stood for many centuries, and will last longer than the auberge or its inhabitants; it is the ancient square tower at the east end of the village; the auberge is situated upon the opposite side of the road immediately in front of it.

We crossed the moor which lies between La Barthe and Capvern (famous for its mineral waters), and there gained the great road from Toulouse to Bagnères de Bigorre. About a couple of miles from Capvern, and close to the road, is the celebrated old castle of Mauvoisin. Its situation upon the extremity of the ridge which drops into the valley of the Arros, is grand and imposing; and the amazing solidity of the structure, its immense size, and the courage displayed by its garrison in 1373, who held it for the English, to whom the country of Bigorre at

that period appertained, against the elite of France commanded by the Duke of Anjou, combine to render it an object of interest to the English traveller. Before the invention of gunpowder, it must have been almost impregnable, and only to be reduced by famine, or by cutting off the springs which supplied the garrison with water. It was by means of the latter expedient that the Duke of Anjou forced its garrison to surrender; but even then they only did so upon condition of being allowed to go where they liked, and to take what property they chose along with them.

The building is in form of a square; the walls of great height, without a single window or aperture, and appearing a mass of solid masonry strengthened by huge buttresses. The entrance is by the eastern side, from the second story of the building, and has been reached by means of a half moon arch thrown from the platform in front of the castle to the doorway. This arch has now fallen away, and, as there is no other loophole but the doorway, it is impossible to get into the interior of the building, excepting by means of a ladder of considerable length. I

endeavoured to procure one at the village, but could not; and was thus prevented from examining the interior, which I exceedingly regretted.

Beneath the castle, and at a short distance from it, are the ruins of the Abbey of L'Escale-dieu, secluded in a nook of the valley, and embowered among its overhanging woods. The road passing by the abbey, winds over the hills which separate its little valley from that of the Adour, in which is Bagnères de Bigorre, the cleanliest, the freshest (from its mountain air, and the streams which flow through its streets), and for two months in the year, the gayest little town in France.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON :

J. HADDON, CASTLE STREET, FINSBURY.

A SUMMER

IN

THE PYRENEES.

BY THE

HON. JAMES ERSKINE MURRAY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

JOHN MACRONE, ST. JAMES'S SQUARE.

M.DCCC.XXXVII.

JOHN HADDON, CASTLE STREET, FINSBURY.

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CHAPTER XIV.

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BAGNERES de Bigorre, the most fashionable of all the Pyrenean watering places, is neither situated in the mountains nor in the plains; the bulwarks of the great mountains to the south of

it, do indeed stretch out to the right and left of its sweet valley of the Campan, but in character they are soft and gentle, abounding in sunny slopes and shady groves, and just sufficiently imposing to constitute a connecting link between the mountains and the plains.

From the flattering descriptions which various of the Parisien "water drinkers" have given of Bagnères and its environs, it has appeared to them to be "un rendezvous d'amour; le jeune homme caresse du regard les jolies femmes etrangères ou citadines; le moraliste prepare ses tablettes, à l'aspect de cette foule d'originaux de toutes nations; le naturaliste, au milieu des chants de Sybaris, prête l'oreille au murmure lointain des gaves, a la chute des rochers sourcilleux; l'artisan, le parasite, viennent spéculer sur les vices des riches; le joueur s'y montre, n'ayant d'autre instinct que le gôut de l'or, d'autre divinité que le hasard aveugle et cruel: ainsi Bagnères réunit tout ce qui est la honte, la pitié, le charme et l'honneur de l'humanité. C'est l'abrégé d'une capitale."

It *is* a great city in miniature, and that is the chief reason why Bagnères is not a favourite of

mine, at least during its season—August and September, when Luchon, Barèges, St. Sauveur, Cauteretz, the Eaux bonnes, and the Eaux chaudes send forth their quota of visitors, who, to the number of seven or eight thousand, assemble in this little town, to indulge in all the gaieties of the metropolis, and as far as possible get rid of the ennui which every real Parisien supposes must prevail without its barriers.

Bagnères is, however, one of the neatest, and as I have before observed, one of the cleanliest little towns of France. The waters of the Adour circulate among its streets, which are in general more open and airy than those of most southern towns; the houses are in many places detached from each other, and surrounded with pretty gardens, and villas abound in its vicinity. These qualities and attractions would of themselves be sufficient to induce strangers to visit Bagnères; but it has besides various other advantages. It has its mineral waters and sudatory baths, for those who indulge in such abominations; its Frascati establishment for dancing and gaming, and its reading rooms and museums for those whose health or whose laziness will not permit

them to study the exquisite and not far distant book of nature, whose leaves are no where more gorgeously illuminated than in the vicinity of Bagnères, and form collections from its thousand curiosities for themselves. The walks, and rides, and drives which surround Bagnères, which ascend the hills in which it is embosomed, and penetrate into their little valleys and recesses, are many of them exceedingly beautiful, some of them remarkably so.

We are now arrived in the best known and most frequented district of the Pyreneés; I might almost add, the *only* known district of these mountains; scarcely any one—and least of all the French—quitting the beaten track inclosed by the valleys d'Ossau upon the west, and of Luchon on the east. A solitary Englishman now and then strays across these boundaries, and discovers the great beauties which lie beyond them; but these intruders into their solitudes are yet rare; few strangers have hitherto contemplated the magnificent scenery which they contain, and which in a thousand places may be met with, and where the traveller may, as I have done, wander for weeks or months without en-

countering any human being, excepting the natives. The known district of the Pyreneés, therefore, forms as it were a little island in the centre of the range, and in extent is not more than a fifth part of the whole. But even in this comparatively small district, there are many most picturesque valleys which are seldom visited, either because they are situated apart from the usual paths chosen by the guides, or do not lead from one watering place to another. One of the least known, and most beautiful of these unvisited valleys is that through which I am about to conduct the reader.

Bagnères and the district to the east of it, were already well known to me, and as it was my intention to make the ascent of Mont Perdu ere the weather became so broken as to prevent me, I made a very short stay in that gay little town upon the present occasion, but accompanied by one of my former companions, left Bagnères for Gèdre. The usual route would have been to cross the Tourmalet to Barège and Luz, and proceed up the valley of Gavarnie; and the guides, if asked, would have declared that there was no other path across the mountains.

More prose and poetry have been lavished in extolling the beauties of the valley Campan than any other spot in Europe. This has been chiefly by French writers, whose ignorance of the surpassing loveliness of hundreds of the other Pyrenean valleys, has led them to suppose that the Campan is the finest of the whole. They have, therefore, selected it simply because they know it, and have bestowed just as much praise upon it as to disappoint those who have expected to find it the paradise which they have portrayed, and to detect their ignorance of the incomparably more exquisite scenery in which their own mountains abound.

The valley Campan has its rich fields, its grassy slopes, its crystal river, its wooded summits, and its shady dells; and with a profusion of such features, it cannot be otherwise than beautiful; in addition, it is a garden of industry and plenty, and cannot, therefore, be otherwise than most pleasing to the beholder, and justly deserves very high encomiums: but that the French, in the prose and poetry which the charms of the Pyreneés have elicited from them, should have fallen into the egregious error of

adopting the Campan as the maximum of real or ideal picturesque beauty, establishes beyond a doubt the little knowledge which they have of the Pyreneés.

Accompanied by one of the guides of the place, we left Bagnères at an early hour in the morning, and proceeded up its valley. We soon passed through the little town of Campan, from which the valley takes its name, and where every child which can lisp the words, "Monsieur, voulez vous un bouquet?" presents a rosebud, an asparagus stock, or any thing which may appear as an excuse for beggary; or when taken unawares, and no flower or vegetable is at hand, do not hesitate to substitute, "Monsieur, voulez vous me donner un sous?"

The valley narrows as we approached the village of St. Marie, where the road to Grip branches off from it. This road to Grip is that which is also taken to cross the Tourmalet to Barège, and which I shall have occasion to mention when we arrive at that part of our progress through the Pyreneés. The road after passing St. Marie still continues to wind along the side of the river, and the valley becomes

entirely pastoral. The mountains assume a more dignified character, and the Pic d'Arbizon, which towers far above the others, rises in front, the avant guard of the magnificent mountains beyond it.

By the way-side there is a little auberge, called Paillole, near the spot where one of Augustus' generals is said to have defeated the Bigorrians; and thither, accompanied by a stranger whom we had overtaken, we went to feed ourselves and horses. Wine, bread, and cheese, most excellent butter, and delicious milk were presented to us; the simple but wholesome and substantial items of a mountain breakfast. Our new acquaintance we discovered to be a Protestant clergyman from Bayonne, and a most liberal minded and intelligent person, and intimately acquainted with the writings of our Scottish worthies, many of which have been translated into the French language, and are numbered among the "standard works" of the French Protestant family libraries.

After breakfast, we proceeded on our journey, and our new acquaintance proceeded to Bagnères. At a short distance from Paillole, we entered the

extensive pine forests which hang upon the ridge of mountain which separates the upper districts of the Adour from the valley d'Aure. The ascent of the ridge is lengthy but gradual, and from the Hourquette d'Aure the view of the valley beneath is very fine. It is a bird's-eye view of a rich and expansive valley, diversified with verdant meadows, and fields of yellow grain. Towns and villages crown its most defensible positions, and dark forests clothe the sterility of many of its surrounding heights. This ridge which separates the Adour from the Garonne, is the most remarkable of the Pyreneés. No other is equal to it in length, or so unbroken in its course. It extends from the central range of the mountains, beginning a short distance to the east of Mont Perdu; separates the valleys Campan and d'Aure, forcing the rivers of these valleys to take the opposite courses; stretches away by Melan through the departments of the Gers and Landes, and separates the Medoc country from the sandy plains of the coast among which it terminates at the little village of Vendais.

The Counts of Armagnac were the ancient lords of the valley d'Aure, and at Arreau and Bordères

are the ruins of their castles. The restless ambition which characterized the various members of the Armagnac family, is apparent in history; their feuds with their neighbours the Counts of Foix, and their rebellions against their sovereigns often deluging the country with blood, and plunging it into all the miseries of civil war. The last unfortunate of the race was John the Fifth, less famous for his revolt against Charles the Fifth, than his love for his sister Isabella, whom he married in defiance of the threatened maledictions of the Papal court. The consequences of this crime were his banishment, and the forfeiture of his estates, which were, however, upon his making peace with the court of Rome, and separating from his sister-wife, restored to him by Louis XI. But he again revolted, and was assassinated when about to surrender after a gallant defence of his capital. The family became extinct, his friends and supporters were executed, and his dominions finally annexed to the crown of France.

Prior to the acquisition of this territory by the family of Armagnac, Pierre, Count of Bigorre, gave Bordères to the Templers, who erected it

into a Commanderie, which it continued until the massacre of the knights in 1313, and the destruction of their order; when all the knights of Bigorre, with their commander, Bernard de Montagu, were executed at Auch, and their lands and castles bestowed upon the Commanderie of St. John of Jerusalem, at Aureilhan, near Tarbes.

The path which through the valley d'Aure conducts to Luchon, passes by Arreau, then enters the valley de Louron, and crossing by the Port de Peyresourbe into the valley Larbous, unites with the path which we have already described when visiting the lake of Seculejo from Luchon. We did not descend into the valley of Aure by the usual path from the Hourquette, but skirted along the summit of the ridge until we came directly above the village of Ancizin, where the route being no longer practicable for horses, we were obliged to leave the heights, and scramble down the abrupt steeps above that village.

The valley is rich and fertile, producing all kinds of grain, but the upper parts of it had suffered very severely by the most awful thunder

storm, which, in the memory of the inhabitants, had ever happened in the district. Thunder-storms are in general of short duration; but this storm which had caused so much injury in this valley raged not only for days but weeks. Towards Viel the first appearance of its desolating effects presented themselves. The road, hitherto broad and tolerably good, was lost among fields of sand and gravel, which the river, flooded by the immensity of rain which fell, had swept from the upland districts, and poured over the most fertile soils of the valley, overwhelming them in ruin.

The sad aspect of the scene was greatly enhanced by the solitary patches of productive land which, saved by the currents being turned aside by a hedgerow or clump of trees, yielded its wonted returns, surrounded by barrenness and sterility. But the destruction of a part of the valley before arriving at the considerable village of Viel, was comparatively trifling to that which we were to witness some distance beyond it.

The valley begins to contract above Viel, the path winding no longer in the plain, and ascends the mountain-side ere it enters the gorge of St. Lary.

Here it was that the late storm had wrought the greatest destruction. The village of St. Lary, situated in the centre of its beautiful basin, surrounded by fertile fields and rich meadows, of which each family had its own little portion, was one of the most contented and happy in the whole district, until this fearful storm took place. The swollen river, whose channel through the upper parts of the valley had become nearly choked up by immense quantities of debris, and the enormous rocks which each mountain stream, nourished by the rains into a mighty torrent, had swept from the steeps, and torn from precipices, having at last acquired sufficient force to overcome all the barriers which obstructed its progress through the contracted defiles of Plan and Aragnouet, dashing into its resistless flood the natural bulwarks which for ages had stemmed its most rebellious currents, burst from the gorge of St. Lary, and, teeming with the spoils of its destructive course, spread its abundant harvest over the defenceless valley. The first burst of its pent up wrath was wreaked upon the commune of St. Lary. The inhabitants were driven from their village, the greater part of which was

buried beneath the ruins of the upper valleys, and their smiling fields, their verdant meadows, their little all was by this fell swoop of desolation for ever lost to them.

The Moors of Spain, the soldiers of Augustus, the destroyers of the Armagnacs, had ravaged the valley, and shed the blood of its inhabitants, but over each and all of these calamities time had spread its healing influence, and repaired the mischiefs; not so will it be with this visitation; the sufferers have, indeed, no slain friends or relatives to weep for, but they have starving families who call in vain to them for bread. Industry can never restore to them the soil which had hitherto supplied their simple wants, and the vista of time can present to them no period at which their children may in smiling plenty, again assemble in the "hamlet fane" of their forefathers.

The path high above the river, hung upon the mountain-side, and is in many places very narrow. At one of these awkward spots we encountered a string of mules laden with wool. It was impossible to pass them, and as neither party could turn round, we dismounted and

backed our horses to a wider part of the path, where the mules could pass us; but even there it was so narrow, that the panniers of one of the mules having caught in the flap of my saddle, the concussion, slight as it was, nearly threw the animal over the precipice.

The defile which succeeds the gorge of St. Lary, is several miles in length, and does not widen until after the lateral valley of Rioumajou has united with it, when it again entirely alters in character. The valley, which had hitherto been stretching away directly south, bends abruptly to the west, and the traveller can hardly conceive a more exquisite scene than that which the turn in the path unfolded to us. The river still continues to wind close under the path, and the high mountains which lie between the Peak of Arrouye and the Pic Long to tower above it; but the mountains to the south have receded from its banks, and given space for the upland valley of Tramesaigues.

In no other valley of the Pyreneés is that union of beauty, picturesqueness, and sublimity, which is more or less characteristic of the scenery of

these mountains, found in such exquisite perfection, and so combined and interwoven together. Fertile fields, upon which the corn still waved, were diversified with rich pastures, and interspersed with varieties of trees, whose foliage was already tinted by the autumnal frosts; the village, occupying a distant nook, was almost hidden amongst the woods which surrounded it; the massy ruins of its castle crowned some cliffs above it. Dark forests clung upon the steep mountains which inclosed the valley, and clothed the numerous gorges and ravines leading to the central range, whose snow-clad summits, and rocky peaks, rising majestically above the whole, formed the back ground of this little fairy land.

Most fortunately for the safety of this beautiful little valley during the late storm, it was situated considerably above the level of the river; so that, excepting where the torrents of its gorges had overflowed their banks, it had escaped unharmed. At its upper end, the mountains on both sides of the river almost touch each other; and the path, crossing to the opposite bank, and scooped out of the rock, leaves the valley through an ancient portal, in which the ponderous gate

no longer swung, which, when closed, must have effectually prevented intrusion upon this quarter.

Shortly after passing this portal, we arrived at a place where the tremendous power of the river, when in flood, was fearfully perceptible. Precipices of solid rock inclosed it upon both sides, excepting at one spot, where huge blocks of rock, piled above each other since some convulsion had rent them from the mountains, had for ages stemmed its currents. Situated at a bend of the river, these natural bulwarks, a thousand times stronger than any which the hands of man could raise, was still unable to resist the force of the stream. The foundations of the enormous mass were driven out, and its mountains of rocks precipitated into the bed of the river. The fallen mass had completely choked up the waters until they had so accumulated as to break down the barrier which their own violence had occasioned, and to sweep its ponderous materials before them. The bed of the river had become a perfect chaos of rocks, which in some places formed arches across it, while in others, the stream, losing itself among them, was hidden from our sight; and the path, which by this catastrophe had been entirely

destroyed, now wound among the fallen heaps. There was still some danger in passing the spot, as the slightest shower was sufficient to dislodge the rocks which protruded from the exposed side of the mountain, and hurl them into the river.

We proposed remaining all night in the village of Aragnouet, and many scenes of devastation were passed through ere we arrived at it. This village was built, and the district colonized, by the Christians who, towards the end of the seventh century, were expelled from Spain by the Moors.

From the owner of its auberge, we learnt the particulars of the storm which had done so much damage in the valley. Thunder storms are frequent in the Pyrenees, especially in the vicinity of the central and highest range of the mountains; where, although they are, in general, most common during the spring and autumn, yet few weeks throughout the year pass over in which they have not taken place. Their duration is so seldom beyond the third or fourth day from their commencement, that the peasants look forward to their termination at the end of that period with such confidence as to form their plans, and make

their arrangements, as if the circumstance was a certainty; and, should they chance to endure for a week, they regard this prolongation as an extraordinary incident.

The late storm came on towards the end of the spring; and, though it raged with unwonted violence, it was, for the first three or four days almost disregarded. The peasantry, believing that a limited period was assigned for this warring of the elements, never thought of the sufferings to which they would be subjected should the period be unusually lengthened. Accordingly, they adopted no precautionary measures; they collected no provisions; they did not conceive it necessary to withdraw the shepherds and their flocks from the mountains; and they felt no uneasiness as to their safety.

The fourth day passed, then the week; and still there was no abatement in the violence of the storm. "You can form no idea of its awfulness,"—said our informer—"it seemed as if the mountains which surround our valley were fighting with each other, and their weapons the thunders and the lightnings. The incessant peals, hurled from one summit to another, rolled back

again with more stunning crashings; the lightnings played around our cottages, and during the darkness of the nights, illuminated the mountain-tops, whose fantastic-looking peaks every instant appeared shrouded in a blaze of light; while the rain descended in torrents which no cottage roof could resist, and which threatened to sweep our dwellings from their foundations, and wash us into the river, whose swollen waters, rising far above the limits of their highest floods, were already robbing us of our property. Our thoughts were at first directed to the danger of the shepherds and their flocks, but to whom it was impossible to render assistance; the strongest man among us could not have braved the hurricane for an hour; so we were obliged to leave them to their fate, and bethink us of our own.

"Weeks succeeded weeks, and still the terrible scene was the same. There was no abatement in the thunderings, no interval in the lightnings, nor cessations in the rains. We gave ourselves up for lost, and believed that 'the end of all things was at hand.' It became apparent, that death by famine, or perishing in the waters which raged around us, was the fate which

shortly awaited upon all of us. Silent stupified sorrow overwhelmed us, and our feelings were fast drying up; when, in the end of the sixth week, peace again reigned in the valley, and the clouds cleared away. The change which the first knowledge of the fact wrought upon our despairing minds may be conceived, but cannot be described."

The effects of the storm were dreadful to these poor mountaineers. The shepherds, indeed, had outlived it, but the greater part of their cattle and sheep had perished; and many prosperous years will not make up to them the losses which have befallen them.

We left Aragnouet early next morning, taking along with us one of its inhabitants to conduct us across the high mountains which separate the head of the valley of Arreau from that of Gavarnie, or the Lavedan: the guide whom we had brought from Bagnères, although a native of that town, and been employed for twenty years in his present capacity, had never travelled the route which we had chosen.

Passing the little hamlet of Plan, from which there is a path into the Spanish valleys of Bielsa

and Gistain, by the Port de Bielsa, we commenced the ascent of the mountains. The view of the summits of the central range from many parts of the ascent is magnificent. From the Pic de Cambiel, on the west, to the Maladetta, on the east, a crescent of peaks, of every variety of shape and appearance, presented themselves, including the very highest of the Pyreneés, and the most numerous concentrated assemblage of elevated summits in Europe. Higher mountains there are, by a couple of thousand feet in Switzerland, than are to be found in the Pyreneés; but they are neither numerous, nor situated together. Thus in the district in Switzerland which contains the greatest number of high summits,—the Oberland Bernois,—six mountains, ranging from ten to twelve thousand feet in height, are to be found; whilst, in a similar extent of Pyrenean scenery, twenty-one mountains, varying from ten to eleven thousand feet in height, may be seen and counted from various points of the department in which we now were. The Swiss scenery may be called an *aristrocacy* of mountains—the Pyrenean, a *republic;* in the former, a few isolated summits domineer far above the others; in the latter, they are more upon an equality.

The Port of Cambiel, at an elevation of nearly eight thousand feet, is an immense gap between the mountain of the same name, and the outer ridge of the Pic Long. Excepting the Port d'Oo, at the head of the valley Lasto, this port is the highest in the Pyreneés which is passable for horses; and, although very steep towards the summit, yet there is none other which can be passed with less danger.

From the west side of the port, the most striking object to be seen is the Vignemale, whose double cones, but a few feet inferior in height to Mont Perdu, rise above the other summits, and are separated from each other by its enormous glacier, upon whose surface the mid-day sun was shining resplendently. The valley which we now descended, surrounded on all sides by very high mountains, yields the most luxuriant pasturage, and was filled with flocks and herds. The only individual in charge of the first troop which we met was a peasant-girl, who treated us with great civility. Upon my asking if she could give us any milk, she conducted us a little way down the mountain, until we arrived at a spot where a few flags of stone were lying. One of

these she raised, and disclosed a little fountain, in which the pitchers containing the produce of her flocks, were immersed. Of the contents, deliciously cooled in this little dairy, and given to us with no sparing hand, we drank most liberally; and, shortly after, passing through the meadows above the village of Gedre, where its inhabitants were busily employed in making hay, we arrived at our journey's end.

CHAPTER XV.

Ramond—Mont Perdu—Valley of the Lavedan—Plan of the ascent of Mont Perdu—Gedre—The Famous Peyrada, or Chaos—Devotion of the Peasantry—Gavarnie—The Marboré—Its appearance in Winter, and in Summer—Ascent to the Breche de Roland—Magnificence of the Breche—Murder of a Spanish Muleteer—Descent from the Breche—Spanish side of the Marboré—Mountains in a state of Decomposition—Superstitions of the Spanish Shepherds—Appearance of Mont Perdu—Pyrenean Shepherd's mode of collecting his Flocks together—Night in a Cave.

RAMOND, whose name is so intimately connected with the scenery of the Hautes Pyreneés, and whose geological researches among the mountains of that department have tended so greatly to benefit his favorite science, was the

first individual who succeeded in attaining the summit of Mont Perdu.

Doubts as to the character of its formations led him to undertake the enterprize, considered most hazardous if not impracticable by the natives of the district. Ramond's first attempts were made upon the northern, or French side of the mountain, over the eternal snows and glaciers which clothe it from its summits to the lake beneath it. The obstacles, however, to the ascent upon that quarter were altogether insurmountable, and the idea of overcoming them was abandoned. Undeterred, however, by these failures, Ramond, several years after the period of his first attempts, stormed the mountain from the Spanish side, and arrived at its summit. The reward of his success was the gratification of ascertaining the fact that this, the second of the Pyreneés, consisted of the formations which he had supposed it to be, thus establishing opinions which he had expressed regarding the structure of this part of the Pyreneés. For his success in the ascent of Mont Perdu, Ramond was greatly, indeed wholly, indebted to the activity and intelligence of a native of Gedre, by name Rondo.

Since Ramond led the way, several individuals have ascended Mont Perdu, and I, ambitious to be among the number, resolved to do so likewise. Both Ramond and his friend Rondo have long since been gathered to their fathers; but the latter has bequeathed to his son the honourable, and not altogether barren inheritance of his knowledge of the secret paths of the mountain; who now enjoys the undisputed privilege of conducting strangers to its summit.

When passing through Gedre in the winter, I called upon Rondo *the second*, and made the appointment to accompany him to the summit of Mont Perdu, which I had now come to fulfil. Immediately on our arrival in Gedre, I sent for Rondo, who, as the season for such an expedition was almost terminated, had given up hopes of seeing me; and our plans for the expedition of the ensuing day were soon completed.

The Lavedan, in which we have arrived, comprizes not only the great valley which, commencing beneath the walls of the Marboré, opens into the rich plains of Bearn near the famous college of Betharam, but the whole of the smaller valleys which diverge from the banks of its river,

the Gave de Pau, among which are included the valleys of Cauteretz, the Bastan, Heas, and others. The summer and the winter aspects of the Lavedan and its dependent valleys, excepting that district of it which extends from the basin of Luz to the circle of the Marboré, and which is very frequently styled the valley of Gavarnie, were already familiar to me. The valley of Gavarnie I had only contemplated during the depths of winter, when its banks, and rocks, and summits, divested of animal and vegetable life, were sheeted in snow and ice, when its villages were almost deserted, and the stillness of its deep gorges and defiles was only broken by the cracking of the ice, or the falling of the avalanche.

Rondo, accompanied by his nephew, who had once made the ascent of Mont Perdu, awoke me by daybreak the next morning, for it was very necessary that we should commence the long and difficult journey which we had before us, at an early hour. The plan of our expedition was to pass the summits of the Marboré by the Breche de Roland, and descending into the valley beyond them, reach before night the base of Mont Perdu;

where, if the Spanish shepherds had not already quitted the high pastures of the Millaris, we should find shelter during the night in their hut; or supposing that the late storms had forced them to descend, we were, in that case, to content ourselves with the most convenient resting place we could find; and bivouack under the shelter of a projecting cliff, or to leeward of a mass of rock; and with the appearance of the first streak of daylight, commence the ascent.

The weather, which for several weeks had been broken and uncertain, had now become apparently settled, and seeming likely to continue so, we did not burden ourselves with a greater stock of provisions than was necessary for two or three days; indeed I hoped to return to Gedre the following night, should no unforeseen accident befall any of the party. My host of the inn, however, assured me of the impossibility of performing this feat, which, if I had not felt inclined to disbelieve the statements of those who had retreated before the dangers of the ascent to the Breche de Roland, as to their fearful character; and learned to reduce within the limits of *plain* English the *superlatives* with

which, upon the most trivial occasions, the French interlard their expressions, and so lavishly make use of in their descriptions, I should scarcely have hinted at performing.

The village of Gedre is situated in one of those spots so frequently met with in the Pyreneés, where industry and cultivation are found, like an oasis in the desert, embosomed among stern and rocky scenery. The mountains, less abrupt and precipitous than in other parts of the valley, and receding from the banks of the Gave, have permitted the soil of the upper districts to accumulate around their base; and scattered among the natural and artificial terraces, each one of which is the property of a separate individual or family, are the cottages of the peasantry, some of them whitewashed, and all surrounded by little fields of grain, or meadows, whose scanty produce is sufficient to secure their owners from starvation during the winter, and supply their few and simple wants.

The valley again contracts soon after leaving Gedre, resumes its wild and savage character, and we shortly arrive at the Peyrada or Chaos, where even *desolation* in ruins may be beheld. Some

terrible convulsion of nature, acting with awful force upon the great mountains which flank the valley, has torn and rent them in a thousand places, and shivered their granitic summits into pieces. The fallen masses, piled high above each other, and of enormous size, choke up the valley from side to side. Single fragments form arches across the torrent; others, obstructing its progress, force it into rapids or cataracts; and the path, lost in this labyrinth of huge blocks, —such as the Titans may have hurled against the heavens,—winds for a long way among these confused heaps. One of these rocks, held in great veneration by the peasantry of the district, and nearly equal in sanctity to the famous Caillou de l'Araye, in the valley of Heas, is that which is the largest and most remarkable of the millions of the Peyrada. It is called the Raille, or Stone of Notre Dame; and pilgrims to the chapels of Heas or Gavarnie, generally offer their prayers at the bottom of the gigantic mass or at the top, if their faith gives them courage o climb it.

As we approached Gavarnie, the gloomy solitude of the defile through which we passed, the amazing height of its walls, and the rushing of

its Gave, began to lose their interest; and every turn and rising of the path is eagerly passed and topped, in expectation of beholding the great object of astonishment and wonder to the thousands who yearly pass through the valley of Gavarnie to behold it—the magnificent and unequalled scenery of the Marboré. The towers of this immense barrier between the two countries appear in succession; then the glaciers at their base, forming the covering of the perpendicular wall from which they spring; and, lastly, the wall of rock, which in the form of a crescent, terminates the valley of the Lavedan. The valley again widens near the village of Gavarnie, and the high valley d'Ossone branches away to the right, through which a glimpse of the snow-capped Vignemale may be caught, before crossing the bridge over the Gave.

At the little inn of Gavarnie, where, in the height of the season, the numerous visitors of the scenes in its vicinity rendezvous to partake of the luxuries of its well-managed cuisine, we breakfasted, completed the arrangements for our expedition, and were soon again on our way to the foot of the Marboré. An hour's walk through

the meadows which intervene between the village and the Marboré, brought us beneath its gigantic heights. Some idea I may convey to the reader of this extraordinary scene, some faint conception of its sublime grandeur and surpassing magnificence; but to describe the Marboré in that manner which they who have looked upon its wonders must feel that it is entitled to, would be a hopeless task for any pen unguided by the hand of a Milton or a Dante.

This was the second time that I had beheld the Marboré. My first visit to it was in winter, and its appearance then I shall first describe. The plain of Gavarnie, and the Oule, or basin of the Marboré, were covered with snow, many feet in depth, which we crossed with little difficulty. We then found ourselves in the centre of an amphitheatre, whose walls, rising perpendicularly for more than fifteen hundred feet, were draped, in some places from top to bottom, in others midway down, with curtains of polished ice, projecting portions of the dark rock alone marking its transparent surface. Above the circling ramparts of this amphitheatre, and rising from the beds

of virgin snow which, crowning their summits, formed a coping worthy of their character, appeared a mountain of terraces, each story dimly outlined by the border of black precipice which supported it; and, from the highest of these terraces, and more than two thousand feet above the ramparts from which they spring, again rise detached columns of solid rock a thousand feet above the pedestal upon which they rest—their capitals, the snows and glaciers which never leave them.

The many cataracts which, at other seasons, dash from the ramparts into the basin beneath, and whose sounding falls ring among the precipices, were now dead; weeks of severe frost had almost dried them up, and the small remnants of their waters trickled down the rocks, and over their icy coatings, noiseless and unobservable. Not a speck of cloud floated in the air, and the sun, beating full upon the glacier above, and the wastes of snow beneath, illuminated their surface with a dazzling brightness.

Such is a faint description of the winter garb worn by the Marboré; one of nature's grandest

works; the contemplation of which strikes the beholder with awe and admiration, where—

> "We feel the present Deity, and taste
> The joy of God, to see his awful works;"

and in comparison with which the noblest efforts of man's genius, the gorgeous ruins of antiquity, the Palmyras, and the Coliseums, nay, even the Pyramids, dwindle into insignificance.

The scene was now changed. The summer's burning suns had breathed over the amphitheatre, and the icy curtains of its walls had fallen away. The glacier cushions of its stories had shrunk to half their former size; the fountains of its cataracts were opened up, and a circle of torrents shooting from the stupendous heights, some dashing upon the projecting precipices ere they reached the basin below, were split into slender jets, which a passing gust of wind converted into a shower; others, of greater force, and with more collected waters, were seen, bounding from the platform of the terraces, and, clearing every obstacle, descending unbroken in their fall, until they thundered among the rocks of the Oule. The most magnificent of these cataracts is the origin of the

Gave de Pau. No other cataract in Europe is equal to it in height; and no other portion of European scenery can be compared to that which surrounds its birth-place.*

I left my friend (who was to await my return at Gedre, or Luz) contemplating the majesty of the Marboré, and proceeded on my route to Mont Perdu.

Advancing until we were nearly opposite to the great cascade, we then turned to the right; and, after crossing the various streams which rush through the upper part of the Oule, we arrived at the spot where a narrow sloping shelf on the side wall of the amphitheatre renders the escalade of the first, and apparently most impracticable part of the ascent, a matter of trifling moment to any one accustomed to step along the

* Je n'ai rien vu dans les Alpes qui ressemblât parfaitement à nos Oules, parce que les Alpes n'ont rien qui ressemble à la chaîne du Mont Perdu. L'Oule de Gavarnie, sur-tout, est un de ces objets singuliers qu' on chercherait en vain hors des Pyrénées: je ne pourrais en donner quelqu' idée aux habitans de la Swisse, qu'en la comparant au petit bassin de Leuck, où la Gemmi surmontée de ses tours, représenterait le Marboré, moins ses cascades et ses glaciers; encore cette légère analogie ne soutiendrait guére plus les regards du peintre que ceux du géologue.—*Ramond—Voyage au Mont Perdu.*

edge of precipices; and where the track, bending round an angle of the rock, or projecting crag, hangs over the abyss, there the wary contrabandiers, who have trod the path for centuries, have scooped out footsteps, and obviated the difficulties of the passage. In an hour we had surmounted this natural ladder, and entered upon the high pastures called Les Serrades; where, for a few weeks of the year, the Spanish shepherds bring their flocks to feed upon the scanty herbage of the steep acclivities of which they are composed.*

Here, for a moment, we turned to gaze upon the Marboré, whose lofty towers were becoming more distinct and imposing as the objects at their base were dwindling in "dizziness of distance;" and again resumed our march through a succession of small ravines and gorges, confused with masses of rock, and wreaths of snow, until we came to the foot of the great glacier, which extends from the Taillon, the western horn of the crescent, all along the ridge of the Marboré, passing under the Breche de Roland, covering

* The Spanish shepherds rent their pastures from the Commune of Gavarnie.

the terraces of the amphitheatre, and whose detached masses finally unite with the larger one of Mont Perdu.

Turning the western flank of the glacier, we scrambled over a height of loose debris—the least dangerous, but most annoying part of the ascent, the rolling heaps often carrying us along with them, and cheating us of the progress we had made: and, from its summit, crossed the glacier, in an angular direction, towards the Breche. The glacier, though suspended on a very steep acclivity, was passed without any difficulty. A late fall of snow had crusted its otherwise polished surface with a thin coating, which, yielding to our pressure, gave us a perfect security of footing, and I esteemed as incumbrances the provision of iron cramps and poles with which Rondo was provided.

We then stepped upon a narrow plain of snow, in which, towards the Breche, the sun's rays, beating through the immense gap, had formed so deep a hollow as obliged us to make a circuit round it, and pass close under the rocks on the farther side, ere we could gain the famous Breche which the warlike nephew of Charlemagne,—the

hero of many a romantic story and tale,—is said, in tradition, to have cleft with his terrible sword in the wall of rock, which, dividing Spain from France, shielded the Moors from the exterminating vengeance of his armies.

Having satisfied my curiosity in gazing from the southern side of the Breche over the mountains and valleys of Arragon, I returned again to the esplanade of snow on the French side, to rivet upon my memory the appearance of this gigantic door-way from that quarter. Let the reader imagine a wall of rock, from three to seven hundred feet high, raised between France and Spain, and actually separating them. Let him then suppose that Roland, mounted on his war-horse, and anxious to pass the barrier, has cut, near the centre, with a stroke of his sword, a breach three hundred feet in width, and he will then have an idea of what the mountaineers have called the Breche de Roland.

The wall is not thick, but derives support from the towers of the Marboré, which rise majestically above its gafe, and all its avenues, resembling a citadel such as Roland would have placed there to defend the passage. The battering of the

storms and rains, and the atmospheric changes, have left such evidences of their wasting effects upon its surface, especially upon its southern side, as to foretel, in the course of time, the decay of this enormous barrier. The elements have wrought the greatest havoc upon the lower parts of the wall, where it is in a manner excavated, and rendered so top-heavy, that a far slighter convulsion than that which split the Coumelie, and created the Peyrada, would be sufficient to destroy the symmetry of the Marboré, and hurl its lofty towers from their high resting-place into the valleys.

Upon the southern side of the Breche, and at a little distance from it, is a small cavity under its walls, which the contrabandiers use as a place of refuge from the storms, and thither we proceeded to partake of our provisions. It was in this rude chamber that the body of an unfortunate Spaniard who had been murdered about a fortnight before I visited the place, was found. He had come to the annual fair of Gavarnie, for the purpose of purchasing mules; but, not finding any to his liking, had set off on his return home. Some of his countrymen, aware that he had not parted

with the money which he had brought to pay for the mules had he bought them, resolved to murder him, and gain possession of it. He was seen to leave Gavarnie towards the afternoon, with two other Spaniards, who were not known to the villagers, but who seemed to be known to him. A couple of days after the fair, a party left Gavarnie to visit the Breche, one of whom, upon entering the cavity in which we were, observed the arm of a human being protruding from under the stones with which its floor is covered. The alarm was given, and the rest of the party arriving, the body was removed from beneath the heaps which had been piled above it, and recognized by the guides as that of the Spanish muleteer who had left Gavarnie two days before.

Upon the return of the party to Gavarnie, information was given to the authorities of the murder; but they could adopt no measures, either with a view to discover the perpetrators of the crime, or for the burial of the body. The French jurisdiction did not extend a single foot beyond the southern side of the Breche de Roland; a murder committed there was the same as if it had been committed at Madrid; and all that they

could do, was to give notice to the nearest Spanish authorities of the circumstance. This they did; and, as the murdered person was a native of one of the neighbouring valleys, his family were soon informed of the event; and his sons, accompanied by their friends, came to the Breche, and carried home his body.

His murderers must have formed their plans before leaving Gavarnie, and fixed upon this spot for the scene of their savage purpose. Here they had come (as is the custom with those who are benighted in crossing the Marboré) to pass the few hours of darkness, before descending the rugged steeps of the Spanish mountains. The murdered man was remarkable for his strength and activity, and quite equal to repel the assaults of any two individuals who attacked him openly; his death must, therefore, have been compassed by the foulest means. Most probably, the muleteer, wholly unconscious of his danger, had fallen asleep, and the murderers, watching for the opportunity, had sheathed their knives in his breast, ere he could be aware of their intentions. Supposing this to have been the case, the strong man, even in his dying moments, must have

struggled fiercely with his murderers; for the whole interior of the cavity, the floor and the rocky sides, were still covered and spattered with clotted blood. Never was a crime of deepest dye committed in a situation which yielded more temporal security to its perpetrators, less hope of succour to its victim; where no eye but an Almighty one could rest upon the scene; and where no human ear could hear the wailing cries of the perishing, nor arm be stretched forth to save him.

The body of the murdered was indeed gone; but the traces of the crime were too fresh and recent to permit of us converting the chamber into a salle-a-manger; an unshaded block outside was preferred, and we soon finished our repast.

The view around the French side of the Breche is one of mingled rocks, precipices, snows, and glaciers. On the Spanish side there is no glacier, and scarcely any snow, excepting in the deep crevices which extend along the basis of the Marboré, while the eye can, here and there, discover solitary patches of vegetation among the great rocks, scattered in every

direction, and the stony hills heaped one above another.

The usual descent from the Breche is by a path leading along the ridge for some distance to the right, and which, evading the slopes of debris which lie immediately beneath it, winds down the mountain where its surface is of a more solid nature; but, as following this track would have caused us to make a considerable detour, we chose to go straight down the slopes of debris; where, in reality, there was little danger to be apprehended, provided we did not follow each other, but went down abreast; so that the loosened stones might not, in rolling, strike any of the party. Sometimes walking, sometimes carried along with the slipping mass, we arrived unharmed at the bottom, with our shoes well-filled with sand and pebbles. To have ascended these slopes would have been a very different task; we should then have been in the situation of the poor fellows in the tread-mill, taking many steps, but making little advance.

We then crossed the bottom of this deep ravine, and skirted along the crumbling sides of the Marboré by a scarcely perceptible path, a single

false step upon which would have given us a roll of many hundred feet, until we reached the Millaris,—the name of the narrow plain which stretches towards Mont Perdu, and is inclosed on the one side by the ridge of the Marboré and the Cilindre, and on the other by the most extraordinary looking mountains I ever beheld. The violence of the winter tempests, and the sudden transitions from cold to heat, and vice versa, acting upon their limestone formations, had so decomposed their surface, and prevented the growth of vegetation upon a soil, which, but for such causes, would, from its nature, be most productive, as to give them the appearance of mountains of slate rubbish; here and there a band of solid rock was to be discovered; but, in general, the aspect of the mass was that of crumbling decay. Upon the plain of the Millaris, which, almost throughout its whole extent, presents a surface of bare rock, the same operating causes have acted in a different manner. It is rent and cracked in a thousand places; narrow but deep crevices cross it in all directions, most of them filled with water, whilst others, which were dry, allowed

us to scan their depth; and over which we had to step, or leap, according to their breadth.

The simple-minded inhabitants of the Spanish valleys believe in a tradition which tells us, that at one period the sterile plain of the Millaris, and the adjoining mountains, were clothed with the most beautiful pastures; but that God, displeased with the shepherds of the district, commanded them to leave them. The poorest of the shepherds obeyed the order; but the rich, disregarding it, a terrible storm was the consequence, whose waters drowned the disobedient mortals, and washed away their pastures. Upon the eve of St. John, the rebellious shepherds are still to be seen wandering among the wilds of the Millaris, vainly searching for their cottages and green fields.

The extremity of the Millaris is closed in by Mont Perdu, whose summit appearing above the collar of clouds which encircled it, seemed a mass of rock floating in the air. The Arragonese seldom call this great mountain *Mont Perdu*, but include it, the Cilindre, and the highest of the towers of the Marboré, under the denomination of *Las tres Sorellas*, or the three Sisters, which

from the Spanish side of the range, are the most decided in character of all the neighbouring summits; and resemble three enormous buttresses which have been placed to sustain the centre of the mountain wall, whose extremities dip into the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

The hut where we expected to find the Spanish shepherds, and obtain shelter for the night, is not far from the base of Mont Perdu, and thither we accordingly repaired. Neither shepherds nor flocks were, however, near the hut, although from the appearances around it, it was evident that they had very recently deserted it. In the immediate vicinity of the cabin, where the flocks during the period of their sojourn in this Alpine region are assembled each night for safety, the herbage was exceedingly rank and luxuriant, and among the thick grass I observed quantities of molehills, many of them freshly raised. I did not expect to find this little animal at a height of at least seven thousand five hundred feet; and the situation of the place, rendered it a curious circumstance that such a creature should have found its way there. The mole delights in rich and deep soils; and when we do meet with them

upon the mountains, it is generally by the sides of the brooks and streams, where the soil has accumulated, and the vegetation is finest; but the little patch of land upon which I observed them at this cabin, was not only situated at this immense height, but it was entirely isolated from the lower pastures by wastes of bare rock of great extent: so that by what instinct the little animal, supposing that he had (as I imagine he must have done) travelled from the plains beneath, could have been induced to undertake so long a journey over the rocks to reach this little oasis, and before arriving at which he must have fasted for many a day, must be a subject of some conjecture.

We had made up our minds to remain at this cabin during the night, and were engaged in collecting the few pieces of wood, the remnants of the shepherds' store, for the purpose of lighting a fire, when Antoine recognized a figure upon the opposite mountain. Rondo was now certain that the shepherds were still among the lower pastures, and as the little heap of wood which we had gathered, would have lasted but a very short time, we proceeded down the mountain, in the

direction of the great gorge of Ordessa. This was lengthening our journey of the morrow very considerably, but fire and shelter at this height, were well worth a slight additional fatigue.

Descending the mountain for a considerable way, we came in sight of another flock, towards which we bent our steps. We soon came up with them, and informed their shepherd of our intention of intruding upon his hospitality for the night, and he, poor fellow, nothing loath to have his solitude broken in upon, even by strangers, most cordially assented. Night was now fast approaching, and the Spaniard had already began to collect his flock together.

The celerity with which the shepherds of the Pyreneés draw their scattered flocks around them is not more astonishing than the process by which they effect it, is simple and beautiful. If they are at no great distance from him, he whistles upon them, and they leave off feeding and obey the call; if they are far off, and scattered, he utters a shrill cry, and instantly the flock are seen leaping down the rocks, and scampering towards him. Having waited until they have mustered round him, the shepherd then sets off on his

return to his cabin or resting place, his flock following behind like so many well trained hounds. Their fine looking dogs, a couple of which are generally attached to each flock, have nobler duties to perform than that of chasing the flock together, and biting the legs of stragglers; they protect it from the attacks of the wolves and bears, against whose approach they are continually on the watch, and to whom they at once offer battle. So well aware are the sheep of the fatherly care of these dogs, and that they themselves have nothing to fear from them, that they crowd around them, as if they really sought their protection; and dogs and sheep may be seen resting together, or trotting after the shepherd in the most perfect harmony. There is no such sight to be witnessed in these mountains as "sheep driving;" no "knowing little collies" used in collecting the flocks, or keeping them from wandering; the Pyrenean shepherd, his dogs, and his flock, seem to understand each other's duties; mutual security and affection are the bonds which unite them. The same confidence subsists between the Pyrenean shepherd and his flock, as that between the shepherd of

Palestine and his, described in the parable of the good shepherd, of whom it is said, "he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice."

The cabin to which the shepherd conducted us was far superior in comfort, and more dignified in appearance to the generality of the hovels among the high pastures, whose roofs of stone or turf but very inadequately protect their inmates against the storms of rain and sleet to which they are frequently exposed. It was a small cave, about ten feet square and six high, situated under a great mass of rock, and so secluded among fragments of the mountains, that it would have been difficult indeed for any one, unacquainted with its localities, to discover it. The entrance, originally the full height and width of the cavity, was partly built up with loose stones, and a little doorway left at one corner. Once inside of this dwelling, the storms were not to be dreaded; not even the cold; its being situated nearer the valleys, enabled its owners to procure fuel without very great toil; and the interior being naturally dry, the influence of a good fire was very soon felt within it.

In front of the cave was a platform of mingled rocks and turf, and there the assembled flocks, selecting the most comfortable spots, established themselves for the night; the dogs took their accustomed stations upon the knolls along side, and we entered our place of rest.

The cave was jointly tenanted by the shepherd who had brought us to it, and another, who very soon made his appearance; and whose flock and dogs joined those of the other, without the slightest appearance of dissatisfaction on the part of the first arrived.

We now made preparations for our supper. A bundle of sticks was placed in an angle of the rock, which served for a fire-place, and a light being soon struck, they blazed brightly, and the smoke at once ascending to the roof, passed out of the cave, giving us as little annoyance as would the most perfect chimney. We shared our provisions with the shepherds, and they in return cooking in their copper pot (the only culinary utensil which they possessed) a larger quantity than usual of their customary fare, a soup made of fat, salt, and very black bread, divided it with us.

Of the many times which I had slept in the huts of the Pyrenean shepherds, I had certainly never been so comfortably lodged as upon this occasion, or had more reason to be satisfied with my situation. With a roof over me, impervious to the storms, a cheerful fire, plenty of provisions, a right good appetite to diminish them, and the prospect of climbing Mont Perdu on the morrow, it was not possible to be discontented. Having finished our supper, and given the remnants to the dogs, who, although they must have scented the eatables, never quitted their posts until called for, I had the copper pot well purified from the greasy influence of its late contents, and converted it to a use to which it had never before been applied. It was now promoted to the dignity of a punch-bowl, and a famous *browst* I made in it, composed of a well proportioned mixture of wine, brandy, sugar, and water. Here there was no cupboard, and of course neither cups nor glasses; and the wooden spoons with which we had ate the soup, could not well supply their place, but the pot was not so very large as to prevent us holding it to our lips, and drinking out of it

This we did; and I shall never forget the looks of supreme satisfaction portrayed on the countenances of the poor shepherds after they had partaken of its contents. Wine they had seldom tasted, brandy they did not even know by name, sugar they had never seen, and the combination of the whole was to them a nectar of whose delicious qualities they had formed no conception. As the *pot* went round, their dark eyes increased in brilliancy; from being at first shy and silent, they became talkative; so did my guides; and in a jargon, half Spanish, half French, many traditionary stories, incidents, and adventures were related on both sides.

These shepherds were among the number of those who had assisted the sons of the muleteer murdered in the Breche de Roland, to carry home their father's body, and from them I learnt some farther particulars relating to the event. From what they told me regarding the appearance of the body, there could be no doubt but that a desperate struggle had taken place between the victim and his murderers; not only was it covered with stabs, but the arms were marked

with many deep cuts, such as could only have been received in endeavouring to ward a blow, or given for the purpose of loosing a grasp. The suspicions of the family fell upon no particular individuals; and even if they had, it would have availed little towards bringing the perpetrators of the crime to justice. Civil discord raged over the land, and caused its laws to be broken and trampled upon with impunity.

One of the shepherds had in his possession a knife, found beside the body, stained with blood, and supposed to be that with which the crime had been committed. It was a coarse clasp knife with a wooden handle, and of the largest description which the Arragonese peasantry always carry about with them, the shaft attached to a button hole of their jackets by a piece of cord or ribbon. I had no difficulty in obtaining the knife in exchange for a few francs.

The only real desideratum in this cabin, was bundle of heath, or rushes to lie upon; these luxuries were not to be procured on the mountain-side, and the shepherds were contented to sleep upon the floor of their dwelling, without any thing to protect them from its flinty

inequalities. Capotes and cloaks were, however, put in requisition to promote my comfort; and stretched upon them in the far corner of the cave, with my feet most comfortably placed towards the fire, I was very soon fast asleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

Ascent of Mont Perdu—Its Difficulties—Herd of Izards—Dangerous Paths—Summit—A Mountain View—Formations of Mont Perdu—Lake of Mont Perdu—Respiration at Great Altitudes—Descent of the Mountain—Change of Weather—Dangerous Passage of the Breche de Roland—Difficulty in crossing it Glacier—Descent to the Oule of the Marboré—Its Cataracts—Disbelief of the Aubergiste of Gedre—Valley of Gavarnie—Pas de L'Echelle—St. Sauveur.

BEFORE day-break, we had left the cabin, and were on our way towards Mont Perdu; and arrived at the base of the mountain about five o'clock. The weather seemed favourable for our enterprise, and the few streaks of clouds which hung around some of the higher summits, did not appear to the guides portentous of a change.

The most remarkable feature which is first passed in the ascent is the Tour de Gollis, an immense circular and altogether inaccessible rock, many hundred feet in height, resembling,—as its name denotes,—a huge tower, entirely detached from the masses of the great mountain. The path skirting along the base of this solitary protuberance then enters upon a high sloping terrace, composed of the debris of decayed rocks.

This, the first of the series of terraces, which, rising one above another, form Mont Perdu, is succeeded by a deep ravine which separates it from the great band of solid rock which supports the second terrace; at whose base the difficulties of the ascent may be said to commence. A slight fissure in the rock affords the means of scaling it, and of arriving at a slaty slope of the same character as the preceding. Several lower terraces, and projecting rocks, are then scrambled over; among which we came suddenly upon a troop of izards. After the first surprise, they turned round and gazed at us, evidently more astonished at having the solitude of their fastnesses broken in upon, than afraid of our injuring them. Antoine shouted, and they trotted quietly

on before us towards the only pass, which, at the extremity of the acclivity upon which we found them, led to the summits of the heights above. This incident, supposing that we had been quite ignorant of the existence of the single route to the crest of Mont Perdu, would have discovered it to us; and, from the casual circumstance of meeting a few izards, we should at once have been enabled to reach that goal which the illustrious Ramond had so long unsuccessfully endeavoured to reach, and which he, and the father of Rondo, had encountered so many hardships and dangers ere arriving at.

This little pass, and the ridge to which it led, although not generally esteemed the most dangerous part of the ascent, was, nevertheless, at the time we passed it, by far the most insecure. The heights by which the troop of izards had passed over, are separated from the last great summit of Mont Perdu by a narrow ravine; and they, and the extremity of the acclivity, or terrace from which they are ascended, form the wall which, upon the southern side, incloses it.

These heights are only accessible by a natural ladder of projecting pieces of rock, which start

from the outer edge of the platform beneath. From this spot,—from the first steps of the ladder,—I could look over a precipice perhaps a thousand feet high, and so very perpendicular that, by way of plumbing it, I made Antoine bring me a large stone, which we rolled over, and then, watching its fall, could distinctly see it arrive at the bottom, without once having touched the rock from which we cast it. Climbing this ladder, we reached its ridge, along which we had to wend our way until we gained its highest point; from which it was possible to descend, by means of a similar ladder, into the upper part of the ravine.

The walking along this ridge was exceedingly inconvenient. Its breadth varied throughout its whole length from five to eight feet; its surface was but indifferently *macadamized* with loose stones; the precipices dropped away on both sides; and the wind, unbroken by any height, or mountain to the south, threatened to transplant us into the ravine. The rough surface would not permit of us crawling along upon our hands and knees, and it was impossible to walk upright, and keep from stumbling among the stones. Rondo

proposed that we should link our arms together, and then, steadying each other, walk along the ridge abreast. I did not accede to this plan; because, if one of us *did* chance to stumble, the others would have been pulled down by the falling man, and the whole have perished; whereas, by going singly, each one depended upon himself, and could not endanger the safety of the others. This decided, we proceeded, bent double, so that we might present as little surface as possible for the wind to strike upon; halting, and resting our hands upon our knees when the fiercer gusts swept over us. We thus *sneaked* along the ridge in safety; and, sheltered from the wind on its northern side, descended into the ravine.

The upper story of Mont Perdu now rose before us, and we soon crossed the head of the ravine, and arrived at its base, and at that part of the ascent esteemed by many who had mounted it, the most dangerous; and before the difficulties of which not a few of the aspirants to reach its summit, had shrunk back dismayed. Circumstances which I shall shortly mention, made it appear to me the easiest part of the whole route. Rondo, by way of preparing me for our last

escalade, had not ceased to warn me of its difficulty, and to paint its dangers, with what degree of truth, I shall leave the reader to judge. This highest story of Mont Perdu is, towards the south, a circular and perpendicular mass of rock, the lowest part of which, about a hundred feet in height, is situated at the highest point of the ravine, the ridge of which is a line of precipices uniting the heights from which we had descended with this, the wall of the last terrace; and from the spot where the junction takes place, there is distinguished a slight rent from the top to the bottom of the wall of rock which rises above it. This rent is the path to the summit. The waters of the snows above have, in time, worn this fissure, sometimes unscaleable by reason of the stream which pours down it; sometimes from the coating of ice with which it is covered. To the right of the fissure, and within a foot of its edge, the precipices drop away, and far below is seen a great basin of snow and glaciers extending from it to the summits of the ridge which overlook the lake of Mont Perdu.

There was no great quantity of water tumbling

down the fissure; just sufficient to cool our faces, and put us upon our guard against the slipperiness of the wetted rock. Rondo led the way; and I, waiting until he had reached the top, followed. The fissure is in shape angular, and the inequalities of its surface, which renders it accessible, being situated upon both sides, the person who climbs it, having a foot and a hand upon each, is far more secure from danger than when climbing a much less steep *face* of rock. I, therefore, thought the ascent comparatively easy, and being accustomed to consider myself perfectly safe whenever I could lay my hands on any thing which could sustain my weight (thanks to my early instruction in gymnastics), I was very soon along side of Rondo, and at the summit of Mont Perdu.

The crest of the mountain is covered with loose stones of small size, and towards the French side is bordered by a parapet of snow five or six feet in height. My first impulse was to turn round and look down upon the route by means of which we had arrived at this great altitude; but it could only be traced for a short distance, the rest was hidden behind the ridge upon which we

had found the wind so unpleasant. The mountains and valleys of Arragon were then glanced at; but the mist circling through them, and the heavy clouds driving over them, permitted me to have but a very imperfect view of the great district of Spain visible in clear weather from Mont Perdu; but it mattered not, I had already beheld it from the Breche de Roland.

There was, however, neither cloud nor haze to lessen the extent or diminish the outline of the magnificent range of the Pyreneés, over which to the north, to the east, and to the west, the eye could wander unobstructed. The snow-capped summits of its mountains, their rugged peaks, as countless in number as fantastic in their forms, chequered the vast expanse around me, whose horizon my powers of sight alone could limit. In this waste of ether in which the "everlasting hills" appeared like so many rocks and islands, I could recognize among the great assemblage, the tops of those which, boasting a gorgeous prospect, yet gave me but a faint idea of the glorious spectacle which I now beheld; others whose rocky summits although far beneath that upon which I stood, had never been pressed by human foot;

others, among whose steeps and forests I had followed the izard, or sought the bear, and in the valleys at whose base I had joined in the sports and dances of the peasantry; others whose names and whose features were familiar to me; but hundreds whose peaks I had never seen, or having seen, forgotten. Mont Perdu is not a giant surrounded by pigmies: a few feet of superiority of height over many of the neighbouring summits is all that it can boast; but that little is sufficient to entitle it to the honours which it bears, and to be esteemed next to the Maladetta, the noblest mountain of the Pyreneés.

Those who wish to have one of the finest views in Europe, of mingled plain and mountain scenery, of river and of sea, must stand upon the summit of the Canigoû; and if they attain its crest under such favourable auspices as I did, I promise that the most greedy *view-hunters* of them all will leave it satisfied with the beauty and magnificence of the prospect. Those, again, who delight to view nature in her more lonely solitudes, and to find themselves in those regions so far above the world, that the pleasures which they enjoy are no longer those of earth; where

loftier thoughts and imaginations take their place, where their own insignificance as human beings appears in strong realities, and where feelings of Omnipotence and eternity dislodge all others, may be gratified upon the pinnacle of Mont Perdu.

To another class of individuals, to those who would fain fathom the mysteries of the world's formation, and reconcile the various irreconcilable hypotheses which have been propagated regarding it; who would attribute the existence of its mountains to the operation of internal fires, to the depositions of the waters, or other causes, Mont Perdu cannot fail of being an object of great interest. The circumstance of its existence sadly puzzled the geologists, who, having agreed that the primitive mountains were those composed of granite, believed also that the highest summits of the great chains of the European continent, and, among the others, those of the Pyreneés, were formed of the same substance. The observations of the patient and indefatigable Saussure upon the structure of the Alps, had greatly strengthened this idea; the attention of the savans was drawn to the appearances of those mountains, so simple and so perfect in their formations, while

the Pyreneés, where all the known strata existed, where mountains of various matters and substances were resting upon or supporting each other, were deemed unworthy of notice. Ramond, however, turned the tide of observation towards his native mountains, and, by his perseverance, established the fact that Mont Perdu,—notwithstanding its great height,—was a mountain of secondary or tertiary formation, superincumbent upon primitive rock, and superior in altitude to the granitic mountains which rise around it.

From the top of the parapet, or bank of snow upon the northern edge of the summit, is seen the lake of Mont Perdu far beneath, encircled with the immense glaciers which hang upon the sides of the surrounding mountains. From beneath a little mound of stones, Rondo drew forth a small bottle, containing the names of the individuals who had reached the summit of Mont Perdu, since Ramond, in 1802, discovered the path which led to it. The bottle (as was the custom) was then broken, the names of the individuals read over, and that of the author added to the list. The whole were replaced in a fresh bottle,

and carefully deposited beneath a rude arch, which we constructed to protect it from the winter tempests; there to remain until the lonely solitude of its resting-place should be again disturbed, and the same ceremony gone through. The difficulty in respiration so commonly supposed to take place at great altitudes, was not here in the least perceptible to me; and, at this elevation of nearly 11,000 feet, I was not sensible of any kind of bodily inconvenience whatever.

The broken clouds which came sweeping over our heads from the Spanish mountains, the avant couriers of the heavy mists which now enshrouded them, warning us that it would be wise to quit our lofty station before it became too dark to see our way down from it, we drank in solemn silence to the memory of the illustrious Ramond, and departed.

The difficult parts of the descent were, in succession, passed in safety, and in less than one half the time which we had taken to make the ascent, we arrived at the base of the mountain. Here we had appointed the Spanish shepherds to meet us, with our provisions and cloaks, which we had left at their cabin; which they did, and

we sat down to eat our breakfasts. Before we had done, slight drops of rain began to fall; and, looking up towards the summit we had so lately stood upon, it was too evident that we had not left it a moment sooner than we ought to have done, for it was already obscured from our sight among dark and rainy clouds, which, curling along the ridge of the Marboré towards the Breche de Roland, threatened to prevent our passing through it, and to fulfil the prediction of the Aubergiste at Gedre, that we should find it impossible to return until the next day. But we could not well remain another night with the Spaniards, even should it be considered prudent to do so; our stock of provisions was consumed, and that of the poor shepherds was too small to permit of them sharing it with us, though willingly inclined.

We accordingly parted from them, and set off on our way to the Breche. The rain, descending in torrents, soon drenched our clothes; and, to add to the discomfort which it occasioned, our wine-skin and brandy-flask were both empty. "N' importe!" we could do without them; our blood was neither so old or stagnant in our veins

that exercise could not circulate it; and, of this sovereign antidote to cold, we should have ourselves to blame if we had not enough.

The plain of the Millaris, and the crumbling sides of the Marboré,—now more slippery and dangerous than before,—were crossed, and we entered the deep gorge below the Breche. Rondo shook his head at the unpropitious-looking aspect of the pass. The gorge was nearly filled with mist; and of the Breche we could see nothing. Its walls and towers were shrouded in deepest gloom; but the wind, driving the mists furiously along the lower summits, in the direction of the great aperture above, gave us a faint conception of the hurricane we should find in it. Rondo asked me, if I would attempt the passage; and I answered, that if he did not shrink from making it himself, the sooner we proceeded the better; there was no time for deliberation, for it was very cold.

The haze increased in thickness, and the wind in force, as we ascended the side of the gorge; and, by the time we arrived at the chamber of the murdered Spaniard, the blast was fearful; the loosened stones were rolling down the precipices,

and the wall above seemed shaking with its violence. We entered the cave, for a moment, to avoid the storm, while we considered of the best mode of passing through the Breche. This place I had quitted the preceding day, and exposed myself to the scorching sun, rather than look upon its blood-stained walls: four and twenty hours after, wet and cold, I sought its shelter, and felt grateful for its existence.

There was now no time to think about the danger of the undertaking, or the chance of one or all of us, being blown down the glacier, or over the precipice; it was too late to retreat, and advance we must, or remain where we were, and die of cold. Frenchmen, talkative as they are, can be silent on some occasions; and upon this, our arrangements were made as quietly and silently as if we were about to commit an act in which we were afraid of being discovered.

Rondo's plan of walking arm in arm was now adopted, and we sallied towards the Breche. The plan was excellent; no single man could have stood the fury of the blast; and, linked together, we staggered like drunken men before it. The wall of the Breche once gained, we

crept through the gateway, clinging to the projections of the rock; until, turning round its flank, we were in a moment completely sheltered from the wind. I had heard the wrathful wind whistling through the rigging of a vessel, and rushing through a forest; but, through this funnel of the mountains, it roared; and, wreaking its fury upon the narrow plain of snow between us and the commencement of the glacier, it carried whole layers of it before it, tossing and whirling them about ere they disappeared in the mist.

Rondo was of opinion that we should find the coating of snow which had so greatly aided us in crossing the glacier the preceding day, washed away by the heavy rains; and he, therefore, proposed that before leaving our present situation, we should fasten on the iron cramps, and be prepared for such an event. This we did, and linked together as before, we entered upon the snow-bank. Walking abreast in this manner, and bending towards the blast, we gained the lea of the other side of the Breche, as covered with snow, in our short journey, as if it had been shoveled upon us. We now approached the

edge of the glacier, where Rondo's prediction was too truly verified. Its covering of snow was entirely gone, and its bare glassy surface revealed, down which the falling rains and the melting snow formed little streams, adding greatly to the difficulties of the passage.

Among the articles which the preceding day I had stigmatized as useless incumbrances, and treated with contempt, was a small hatchet; yet had we not possessed this little implement, we could not have attempted to cross the glacier. Rondo took the lead, never venturing to put one foot before another until he had first carved a substantial resting-place for it in the steep surface of the glassy track upon which we hung, aware that one false step or the yielding of a piece of ice would send us, like a shot, down the glacier and over the precipice below it. Slowly and cautiously, therefore, did we wend our way across it, halting every now and then to permit of our leader resting his arm from the fatigues of which we could not relieve him; for having once stepped upon the glacier, it was impossible without the greatest risk, to pass each other, and consequently Rondo, being in advance, had the

whole toil of the scooping out of the footsteps to undergo. Once I tried to relieve him, but in endeavouring to pass he had so nearly slipped away, that the attempt was given up ; and thus actually crawling along where the day before I should have thought nothing of running, we reached the extremity of the glacier in safety, and glad I was that we did so, for Rondo was so worn out with the exertion, that I am persuaded had the glacier been fifty or a hundred feet broader, he could not have accomplished the distance.

Here we remained a little while to allow Rondo to rest himself, and then resuming our march, descended into the pastures of Les Serrades. There the mist was less thick, and before we reached the narrow pathway which leads from them into the Oule below, we had passed through the region in which it rested, and could see around us. A momentary glance (for we were far too cold to stand still, and our last halt at the edge of the glacier had severely chilled us) showed me the amphitheatre of the Marboré, its terraces and towers obscured by the dark mist which formed a band all round the circle, and from which, as if it had been a terrible waterspout

bursting from the overcharged clouds, the cataract, swoln to triple its former size by the unceasing rains, plunged among the rocks of the basin.

The most slippery and insecure portions of the narrow ledge upon which we were descending were crawled over upon our hands and knees; the descent was completed, and we stood once more within the mighty walls of the Marboré. It was now impossible to cross the streams which flow through the Oule, at the places where we had stepped over them the preceding day, it was necessary to make the tour of the basin, and pass between the great cataract and the precipice from which it rolled. This we did; the waters of the minor falls were then waded through in succession, and we gained the road to Gavarnie.

Rondo was now very much fatigued, and could come on but slowly; I, therefore, left him and Antoine to follow at their leisure, and set off for Gedre, where I expected to find my valise, and obtain dry clothes. The astonishment of the innkeeper was great, indeed, when I walked into his kitchen. He would not believe that I had been that morning at the summit of Mont Perdu.

"Bah! bah!" said he, "I suppose you mounted to the Breche de Roland yesterday, slept at Gavarnie last night, and have now walked from there; no one could have dared to cross from the Spanish side to-day."

"Well, well," answered I, "Rondo and Antoine can satisfy you on that point when they arrive, meanwhile, I shall lose no time in changing my dripping apparel." I was disappointed in this object; my valise, it seemed, had been left at Gavarnie, and not at Gedre, so that I had passed it, and must take the chance of the guides bringing it along with them. The landlord, however, lending me a shirt, I proceeded to bed, there to await its arrival, and indulge in the luxuries of an excellent dinner, which the worthy host, conscious how much I stood in need of its comforts, lost no time in preparing. Two hours afterwards Rondo and Antoine arrived, bearing my valise. I was now released from my prison; and towards evening the rain having ceased, and the clouds cleared away, I bid my guides (who were "fighting their battles o'er again" by the kitchen fire) goodbye, and left Gedre for Luz.

The narrow defile which separates Gedre from

the sweet little valley of Pragnères, and its pretty meads; the dusky gorge beyond, savage-looking even while the sunbeams play upon it; the famous Pas de l'Echelle, and St. Sauveur, from whose windows hundreds of lights were gleaming, and the music of whose gay dancers came sweeping across the valley, were each in succession passed, and I presently entered the cleanly inn at Luz, where I found my friend; and received the caresses of my fine dog, whom I had been forced to lock up at Gavarnie the preceding morning, to prevent him following me to Mont Perdu.

CHAPTER XVII.

Basin of Luz—Its great Beauty and Fertility—Pic de Bergoms—Church of Luz—Baths of St. Sauveur—Castle of St. Marie—Visit of Burke to the Pyrenees—Valley of the Bastan—Village of Bareges, and its Mineral Springs—Appearances of Bareges in Winter—Curious Method of warming themselves adopted by the Peasantry—Environs of Bareges—Pic de Midi de Bigorre—Lac d' Oncet—Valleys of Estaubé and Heas—Superstition of the Mountaineers—Thunder-storm upon the Tourmalet—Gorge of Pierfitte—Its unequalled Grandeur—Valley of Argeles—Beauty of its Features, and mildness of its Climate—Route to Cauteretz—Cautēretz, and its Baths—Hunting Quarters—Port d'Espagne—Lac de Gaube—Melancholy fate of an English Lady and Gentleman—Sorrow of the Peasantry at the Event—Boiling Springs.

THE basin in which Luz is situated, is, with the exception of that of Andorre, perhaps the most beautiful, as well as the most extensive, in

the Pyreneés. Encircled by lofty mountains, its sole entrances are through the most profound gorges, and along roads scooped out of their rocky sides, hundreds of feet above the torrents which boil beneath; and where the traveller, shuddering at the dangerous path, or delighting in the wild grandeur of the scenery in which he is, as it were, engulfed, is astonished to find the whole character of the scene suddenly change, and a single turn in the path usher him among the softest and loveliest features of fertility. The mountains, above whose precipices he was suspended, and whose rugged cliffs hung over his head, have now receded, and form the picturesque back-ground to the exquisite little landscape before him.

The circular hollow is variegated with corn-fields, meadows, and every species of tree. Its lower eminences are crowned with clumps of wood, or the ruins of old castles; and the waters of the united Gaves from Gavarnie and Barèges, assuming for a time a character in accordance with the peaceful scenes through which they flow, wind along as if they were unwilling to leave it. Villages and hamlets not only skirt the base of

the high mountains which inclose it, but appear spotting their sides, and scattered, half-hidden in the forests, far up among their steeps; where the industry of the peasantry, applied in a thousand different places, have fertilized the slopes and shelves, mingling the yellow of the ripened corn with the sombre foliage of the pine in those regions which, elsewhere, would be devoted to the heath or the box-plant; and high pastures, or dark forests, struggle among the grey rocks and rugged peaks which overtop the whole.

The village of Luz lies at the foot of the high mountain of Bergons, which forms the southern side of the basin; and whose summit, upwards of four thousand feet above the plain, commands a most extensive prospect, not only of the surrounding mountains, but of the whole valley of the Lavedan, and the low country beyond it. The access to the top of the Bergons, notwithstanding its height, is so very easy, that, in fine weather, whole cavalcades of gay parties from the adjoining watering-places, may be seen, mounted upon the sure-footed little ponies of the district, winding, without difficulty or danger, up the path which conducts to its summit, there to form some idea

of the majesty and grandeur of the great mountains beyond it.

The church at Luz is a curious old massy structure, said to have been built by the Templars. It seems to have been intended to supply the joint purposes of a citadel and a place of worship. The church itself, not only being capable of defence, but surrounded by a high wall, full of embrasures, is sufficiently strong to repel the attacks of predatory bands; and, in troubled times, constitute a place of security in which to deposit the property of the inhabitants. On one side of the building is pointed out the door, in barbarous times the only entrance through which the Cagots* were permitted to come into the church. It is now built up; the cruelty, contempt, and aversion with which these outcasts from society were treated by their fellow-creatures, appear only in the pages of history; and, in like manner, we are led to hope that the prejudice which still exists against them, may in time be softened and eradicated.

* The Cagots are a miserable and proscribed race which exist in the Pyrenees, whose origin has been a subject of much controversy.

There are no baths at Luz; but, as at St. Sauveur, where the mineral springs are situated, the accommodation for strangers is seldom equal to the demand—many persons are obliged to submit to the inconvenience of residing half a mile distant from them; while others, who dislike being jostled on all sides by invalids and cripples, prefer the less beautiful, but more retired situation of the former. Luz has also another recommendation; which is, that houses can be had in it at one half of the exorbitant charges which are made for them at St. Sauveur.

The ruins of the castle of Sainte Marie, which crown a high monticule to the east of the village, are exceedingly picturesque. Their origin is the subject of much controversy among the inhabitants of the district. One tradition ascribes their erection to the Knights Templars; who certainly did, at one time, hold considerable possessions in the Lavedan; and to whom I am inclined to accord the honour of having built, not only the church of Luz, and others which are imputed to them, but the greater part of those situated in the mountains of Bigorre and Bearn. The churches which we *know* to have been built by the Templars, have

all the same peculiar form of circular chancel; and, as this characteristic feature marks the holy edifices to which I allude; and it is certain that the Templars did, for a long period, rule among the Pyrenean valleys in which these ancient churches exist, there can be little doubt but that they were erected by them.

Another tradition tells us, that the castle of Sainte Marie was built by the English, in the days of the Black Prince; and that it was one of their last possessions in Bigorre. Of the two traditions, the last is the most probable. First, because the Knights Templars (in this part of the country) did not build castles, but fortified the churches, or the preceptories attached to them. And, secondly, as the sovereignty of this valley, —productive in grain of all kinds,—must have been a matter of infinite importance to the party who so long and so gallantly preserved the castle of Lourdes,—which guards the entrance to it,— to the English monarchy, after the whole of the county of Bigorre had been reduced, it is natural to suppose that they would have endeavoured, by every means in their power, to retain possession

of a place from whose environs they could alone draw supplies.

On this subject, however, we shall be more diffuse when we arrive at Lourdes. Meantime, I shall mention a circumstance which will render the precincts of the crumbling walls of Sainte Marie as dear to many an Englishman as the knowledge that their ancestors once gallantly defended them. They are hallowed by recollections of the great writer on the "Sublime and Beautiful:" of that man of whom Fox could well avow, that he had learnt more from than from all other men and authors; and whose dereliction of early principles, however much we may regret, cannot weaken our admiration for his commanding genius, nor the pride which we feel in calling him countryman. At what particular period Burke visited this part of the Pyreneés I could not discover; certainly, prior to the Revolution, and before the first devastating out-break of its pent-up torrents had so wrought upon his fears, and biassed his judgment, as to have led him to prefer (to use his own words) "the furniture of ancient tyranny, even in rags," than witness the

rush of the waters of liberty which swept them rudely from their resting-place.

The valley of Barèges,—or, as it is more generally called,—of the Bastan, opens into the basin of Luz beneath the castle of Sainte Marie. It extends towards the Pic du Midi of Bigorre; and is, throughout its whole extent, entirely pastoral, and destitute of cultivation; but beautiful in the vicinity of Luz, with verdant sloping meadows, a profusion of fine trees, and innumerable little corn-mills, their wheels driven by the many rivulets which course down the sides of the mountains which border it, and appertaining to each owner of as much land in the neighbouring communes as would raise a few bushels of grain, and who esteems it necessary to have his own particular moulin, in which he grinds the produce of his garden-field.

The village of Barèges, so celebrated over Europe for the character of its mineral springs, is nearly at the head of the valley, which is so very narrow and confined, as to leave at the spot where it is built, scarce room for a single street of houses and the river. This proximity to the Gave, the most turbulent and impetuous in these

mountains, is the source of constant alarm and disquiet to the proprietors of the houses, especially to those who have the misfortune to have their property upon the river side of the village, a considerable portion of which is annually swept away by the torrents. Bulwarks of all kinds have been erected to turn aside the wrathful stream; but so ineffectually, that many people actually build houses for the *season*, and take them down after it is over. This is, no doubt, an expensive proceeding; but the concourse of strangers who flock to Barèges for the benefit of the springs or baths, where the accommodations are so inadequate to the demand, so enormously enhances the value of every thing as to render this temporary house-building a profitable speculation.

Louis the Fifteenth erected a military hospital at Barèges, in which great numbers of wounded officers and soldiers have been healed. The waters are efficacious in various disorders; but are particularly famous for healing wounds. They are clear, but emit an unpleasant smell, and should be drank upon the spot, otherwise their beneficial properties are greatly injured. The

sudatories, especially that allotted to the poor, a kind of subterranean pond, are most unsightly places.

When I visited Barèges in the winter, the Gave had, as usual, carried away the road, which is in summer an excellent carriage one; the mountains were covered with snow, which lay so many feet deep in the street as to be level with the second stories of the buildings; and I found the population of the place,—about thirty individuals in all,—assembled for warmth in the subterranean pond alluded to. They were not actually in the water; but they sat in a circle round the great bath; the hot vapours from which, effectually heating the place, enabled the inhabitants to exist in the midst of the cold and desolation which surrounded them. Both men and women were busily engaged in knitting the various scarfs and shawls, the beauty of which is so remarkable; and for which they find a ready sale during the season of the waters.

The season at Barèges is all bustle and confusion. The hills echo to the cracking of the postboy's whip, and the jingling of his horses' bells; the road, the knolls, and mountain-paths, are

crowded with gaily-dressed strangers, or the natives in their picturesque costumes, who flock in numbers from Tarbes, Lourdes, Argèles, and Luz, to supply the wants of the visitors; and mineralogists, geologists, and botanists, are seen swarming like bees among the rocks, and on the mountain-sides.

This portion of the Pyreneés abounds in beauties. At the head of the valley of the Bastan is the magnificent mountain, the Pic du Midi de Bigorre; the Pic du Midi, par excellence, for there are many of the high summits of these mountains which bear the same denomination. Like the Canigoû, it abuts into the plain, and commands a most extensive view, embracing many mountains and valleys, and the whole of the low countries between Tarbes and Mielan. On the road to its summit, which is but a little more difficult to arrive at than that of the Pic de Bergoms, is the Lake d'Oncet; one of those still dark tarns so common in the Pyreneés.

Upon the opposite side of the Bastan, and in the direction of Mont Perdu, are many scenes well worth visiting; among them, are the Val d'Estaubé, and its circle, or Oule, more developed

but less remarkable than that of Gavarnie. The Val d'Heas, and its Oule and chapel, to which the pilgrimages of the superstitious peasantry are so frequent, and among whose wild scenery the processions of the devotees are so exceedingly picturesque.

In the vicinity of this chapel is the famous Caillou de l'Araye, an isolated block of stone, conspicuous from its immense size and situation. Placed upon the summit of a great mass of debris, it attracts the attention of the stranger, as it has done the homage of the mountaineers. It is the Mount Sinai of their imaginations; they believe that the Holy Virgin appeared to their ancestors in this place, and from the summit of this rock presided at the erection of her chapel in the neighbourhood.

There is a bridle-road from Barèges, which passes over the Tourmalet,—the round-backed mountain which runs across the head of the valley Bastan,—to Bagnères de Bigorre, descending into the valley Campan, by the village of Grip. There are no very striking features along the path; and, excepting as a most convenient means of transit between those two places,

it has no claims upon the notice of the traveller, unless he may have crossed it in such weather as upon one occasion I did; and then he will have good reason to remember it. I left Bagnères in the morning, and arrived at Grip, drenched with the heavy rain which was falling. Here the guide whom I had brought along with me from Bagnères, shrunk from the weather, and the stormy appearance of the Tourmalet, and refused to proceed. In the cabin at Grip, however, I found the mountaineer who is in the custom of conveying the letters from Barèges to Bagnères, who was also on his way to the former village; but, like my own guide, was indifferently inclined to face the storm, and intended to remain until the next day at Grip. I bribed him to come along with me; and, leaving my Bagnerès guide behind, we ascended the Tourmalet.

Only those who have been out in a thunder-storm among the mountains, can form any conception of its terrible character. A thunder-storm in the plains, and a thunder-storm on the mountains, are two very different sort of phenomena; the former is grand and sublime, absorbing our attention, and fixing our regards; but

the latter is terrific and appalling. The exploding thunders, reverberating among the defiles and gorges, nigh stun us with their crashings; and the forked lightning, playing among the rocks and all around, forcibly remind us of the uncertain tenure of our lives. With the elements in such fearful mood, and a driving blast of sleet in our faces, we crossed the Tourmalet, more than once congratulating each other, when a sudden gust of wind drove us from the path, that the track over this mountain was not remarkable for those passages where "the father never waits for his son, nor the son for his father."

Proceeding down the Lavedan, we enter the gorge which separates the exquisite basin of Luz from the valley of Argèles. There is not a more magnificent defile in the Pyreneés than this; certainly not one through which the most timid may wend his way in more perfect security; and free from all sensation of danger contemplate the grandeur and majesty of the pass. It is one of those places which never palls upon the sight; visit it as often as we may, there is always something new to be seen; some feature we had not discovered; or those with which we were familiar

wearing a different aspect, are still as novel and interesting as at first. The sides of the defile are precipitous mountains; rising at first perpendicularly from the bed of the river, but afterwards, having just sufficient slope to permit the box and heath, and various other shrubs and bushes, and a profusion of wild flowers to hang upon their steeps, even where there appears not a particle of soil to yield them nourishment. The numerous twists and bendings of the defile are still more interesting. There little ravines appear, down which the waters from the upper valleys are seen descending, half hidden in the foliage of the ash and oak trees which skirt their torrents and bend over them; while far above are caught glimpses of the higher regions of the mountains, covered with pines.

The road, by means of which alone the traveller, nay, even the peasant of the district, has been enabled to enter this extraordinary scene, has been a work of prodigious labour. For almost the whole length of the pass, it has been formed by blasting the precipice into galleries, two, three, and sometimes four hundred feet above the river; sometimes forced by an elbow of the

mountain to cross to the opposite precipice, there to be forced back again by a still greater obstruction. These crossings and re-crossings of the stream, add greatly to the picturesque beauty of the defile; one moment we are in a spot to which the sun's rays scarcely ever find their way, in the next, we have them beating down upon us in all their splendour; and from the centre of the many marble bridges of one arch, which span the dark abyss, the full grandeur of the scene is developed. Such is the gorge of Pierrefitte; fifty years ago an izard could not have clung to its sides, now carriages of all descriptions pass along the fine road which has been constructed through it.

The valley of Argèles, to which the gorge of Pierrefitte is the magnificent approach upon the south, is like the basin of Luz, a combination of the beautiful, the picturesque, and the sublime; its plain, far greater in extent and width, presents the same richness of cultivation, diversified with wood and water, as the former; and the mountains which inclose it the same appearance of industry, transforming the wilds into gardens and corn fields. Ancient monasteries, ruined castles, and solitary chapels are distinguished

among the woods, beautifying the landscape, and adding greatly to its interest. The woody dells, and deep recesses of many lateral valleys may be scanned from different parts of this Eden of Argèles; and the dark entrances of the gorges of Cauteretz and Pierrefitte, the town of Argèles, and its massy church, and the varied forms of the mountains which inclose it, are but a few of its most prominent features. Situated a thousand feet below the basin of Luz, and sheltered by the surrounding mountains, the climate of this valley is exceedingly mild; milder even than in lower situations beyond the outer range of the Pyreneés. When I passed through it in winter, a short time after the severest storms, and when the gorge of Pierrefitte, the basin of Luz, and the surrounding country were buried in snow, the plain of Argèles, and its lower slopes were totally free from it, and green and beautiful as if it had been spring. With such a temperature, the valley of Argèles is a perfect orchard, abounding in fruits of every description.

The village of Pierrefitte is situated at the entrance of the gorge of Cauteretz, where the road leading to the gay little watering-place of

the same name leaves the valley of Argèles. The scenery along this route is somewhat similar to that of the gorge of Pierrefitte, although not to be compared to it in magnificence. The gorge of Cauteretz is more open; the road does not always hang over its torrents; and the gentler beauties, the little grassy platforms which now and then appear in it, studded with magnificent trees, may render it more pleasing to many individuals than the savage grandeur of the gorge of Pierrefitte.

Cauteretz is built in the hollow formed by the junction of the valleys of Lutour, Cauteretz, and Camp Basque, and in the vicinity of some of the finest scenery and highest mountains of the Pyreneés. Next to Bagneres de Bigorre, it is the most fashionable watering-place of these mountains, and preferable as a place of residence to most of them; at least of those which adjoin the valley of the Lavedau. It is sometimes so very full of visitors, that it is impossible to find accommodation; and unlike most of the Pyrenean watering-places, it is not deserted during winter, but inhabited by a population of several hundred inhabitants. There are some of the best chas-

seurs of the mountains natives of Cauteretz, and it is one of the places in which I would recommend those who are fond of such wild sports as izard and bear shooting, to establish themselves for a fortnight, towards the end of spring; and where I can assure them that they will have themselves to blame if they do not meet with success. There are no scarcity of izards upon the neighbouring mountains, and the bears, not now so plentiful as they were, are still to be found among the pine forests which lie between the Vignemale and the Pic du Midi d'Ossau.*

The baths of Cauteretz are situated at a considerable distance from the town, higher up the valley, and upon the sides of the mountain, where their Grecian porticoes, their esplanades, and terraces, appear somewhat out of place among the pine forests and rugged steeps. The invalids, who cannot perform the distance from the town

* Jean Listapis is the most successful chasseur, and the best guide in this district. Few seasons have passed over in which Jean has not been able to increase the number of notches upon the stick which records his victories over the bears. Implicit confidence may be placed in his honesty, sagacity, and hardihood.

to the baths on foot, are carried in *chaises a porteurs;* fifty or sixty of which strange looking palanquins may be seen plying during the forenoon, along the path by the river side; while the poorer classes, who cannot afford the luxury of such conveyances, are trundled along in wheelbarrows or puny diligences. Some Parisiens of distinction having selected Cauteretz as their place of sojourn during the summer months, it has acquired a character for *good society;* and has consequently become a refuge for the fashionable ennuyé, as well as for the delicate in health, and the infirm. These to the *healthy* visitor, or traveller, are the disagrémens of most watering-places; but at Cauteretz, and other of the mineral sources of the Pyreneés, the sphere of their annoyance being generally limited to the narrow streets of the town, or the gravelled walks and shady places of its environs, they are easily avoided, and their existence forgotten in the solitude of the neighbouring mountains.

Beyond the baths, but in the same valley, that of the Marcadaon, is the cascade of the Pont d'Espagne, the beau ideal, in the mind of the water-drinkers and fashionables of Cauteretz, of a

mountain waterfall; and at the head of the valley to the left of the Pont d'Espagne, is the Lac de Gaube. It was in this lonely lake, embosomed among the solitudes of the great Vignemale, whose hanging glaciers and lofty cones rise in all their majesty upon its southern side, that an English lady and gentleman, who had been but a few weeks married, were drowned. There is a little skiff upon the lake, belonging to the fisherman who occupies the hut on its bank, and gains a livelihood by catching the trout in which it abounds, and selling them to the hotel-keepers at Cauteretz. The unfortunate couple determined to sail round the lake in this skiff, which could only carry two. The lady stepped in first, and the gentleman, pushing the boat from the shore, made a spring to follow her. He was unsuccessful, the skiff had shot away too far, and he plunged into the water. The lady, in endeavouring to seize her sinking husband, lost her balance, and was precipitated into the lake, in whose deep dark waters they both instantly sunk. The melancholy fate of these individuals was at the period of the event a source of much weeping and wailing among the peasantry of the

district, and even now they never talk of it without expressing their sorrow at the untimely death of the young strangers.

Besides the springs which supply the baths, there are various others, which issue, scalding hot, from the rocks by the side of the Gave; and in winter, when the whole scene was one dreary waste of snow, it was a strange and curious sight to observe the waters boiling from their sources, and steaming as they united with the nigh freezing waters of the stream.

Retracing our steps down the gorge of Cauteretz, and through the charming valley of Argèles, beautiful at all times, and in all seasons, we enter the defile which separates it from Lourdes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Defile of Lourdes—Castle of Lourdes—Its History interesting to Englishmen—Its gallant Defence by Ernault de Bearn—The Chivalry of France driven from before its Walls—Assassination of Ernault—Continued Defence of Lourdes by his Brother—Route from Lourdes to Pau—France Pittoresque—St. Pe—Betharram—Pilgrimages to its Calvary—The mingled Devotion and Hilarity of the Peasantry—Plain of Bearn—Chateau of Corraze—Veneration of the Bearnais Peasantry for the Memory of Henri Quatre—Pau—Its Attractions—Splendid View of the Mountains—Society of Pau—Hanoverian Baron—Anecdote of George the Third and Queen Charlotte—Anecdote of a German Soldier—Origin of Pau—Bernadotte, King of Sweden—Climate of Pau.

THE defile of Lourdes,—the approach, on the one side to the wild and interesting beauties of the Pyreneés, on the other to the rich and sunny plains of Bearn,—acquires, from its situation, a

degree of credit to which its own peculiar features would not entitle it. The mountains which enclose it are tame and destitute of wood; the debris of their immense slate-quarries blacken the pastures; and the Gave which winds beneath, no longer pent between opposing cliffs, luxuriates in indolence. The scenery improves after we have mounted the steep ridge in the vicinity of Lourdes, and can look down upon the environs of its ancient castle, the *Mirambel* of the Saracens, and the stronghold of the adherents of the Black Prince in his county of Bigorre.

Although the inhabitants of this district are not unfrequently denominated "les petits fils des Anglais" by the neighbouring peasantry; and although it was the scene of many of the brightest deeds of ancient chivalry connected with the English name; still, every French author who has written upon this part of the Pyreneés, has, either wittingly or unwittingly, abstained from even alluding to that period when it formed a part of the appanage of the Princes of Wales, or noticing the persevering gallantry displayed in retaining it under their sovereignty. From this silence on the part of the only writers who give

any account of the district, few of my countrymen unacquainted with the history of the times of the Black Prince are aware, while they admire the fine situation of the castle of Lourdes, and the gorgeous scenery which surrounds it, that there was a time when the banner of England floated from its towers, when the elite of France could not pluck it from its resting-place; and when its defenders, deserted upon all sides, with not a foot of territory but the barren rock upon which the fortress was built, and without a hope of succour from their distant sovereign, defied their enemies, drove them from their walls; and, for a long series of years, displayed a bravery which no dangers could appal, and a fidelity to their Prince which has no parallel in history. Under such circumstances, a short summary of our dominion in Bigorre may not be deemed uninteresting.

The county of Bigorre, which comprised nearly the whole of the country between the kingdom of Bearn, and the district of Foix, was rendered to Edward III. as the price of the freedom of John, King of France, taken prisoner at the memorable battle of Poictiers. Edward, in 1362, bestowed the Dutchy of Aquitaine,—of which the county

of Bigorre formed a part,—upon his son, the Black Prince; who, in the following year, accompanied by his princess, left England, to take possession of his continental dominions.

Bordeaux was the capital of his dutchy, and the seat of his government; but the Count of Armagnac, captivating the fancy of the royal pair with the description which he gave to them of the beauty of their distant little kingdom in the Pyreneés, and of its flourishing capital, Tarbes, persuaded them to visit it. Accordingly, they came to Tarbes, where they remained for a considerable time, and held their court, at which the whole of the neighbouring princes assembled to do them honour.

The Black Prince, delighted with his mountain province, made excursions through its various valleys; in some of which he built new fortresses, in others, strengthened those which existed. With the structure of that of Lourdes he was particularly pleased, and at once perceived the great benefit which would accrue to him from a continued possession of it. "It is," said he, "the key of many countries, and from it I can find my way into Arragon, Catalonia, or Barcelona." Its

fortifications were immediately improved, and the command of the place given to Pierre Ernault, a native of Bearn, a cousin of the Count of Foix, and an individual upon whose fidelity the Prince thought he could rely. Upon bestowing this government upon Ernault, the Black Prince said to him, "Master Pierre, I constitute and appoint you captain of Lourdes, and warden of Bigorre; see that you preserve them, and render a good account of them to my father and myself." The Prince, having regulated the government of his province, and intrusted its defence to those in whom he thought he could confide, shortly after broke up his court at Tarbes, and returned to Bordeaux.

No events of importance took place in Bigorre, and the Prince's right to its sovereignty remained undisputed, until the war broke out between France and England, in 1369. Several of its barons bribed with French gold, then deserted to the enemy, and delivered up their castles, which they had sworn to defend:—and the approach of the Duke of Anjou, at the head of an army composed of the best soldiers of France, terrified others into submission. The governors of Mauvoisin

Lourdes, and other places, however, indignantly refused the bribes tendered them, and bade defiance to the French host. Mauvoisin was first attacked, and was (as I have before mentioned) gallantly defended; and honourably surrendered, when the means of defence were at an end. Tarbes was treacherously given up by its governor, and the Duke laid siege to Lourdes.

The castle of Lourdes is built upon an immense rock, which rises from the centre of a hollow, or basin, formed by the surrounding hills. The Gave of Pau, issuing from the gorge leading to Argèles, flows round its western base, thus adding to the strength of the place; while the other sides of the rock are almost inaccessible; and, in olden times, must have been rendered completely so by the walls and towers which rose from them.

The first efforts of the besiegers were directed against the town, which hangs upon a slope to the east of the castle; and which, for fifteen days, baffled their utmost exertions to take it. At the end of which time, the governor, having withdrawn the whole of the inhabitants, and lodged them within the walls of the castle, the Duke of

Anjou, amid great rejoicings, took possession of the deserted houses. He could, however, make no impression upon the castle. Day after day for six weeks was the assault renewed, but all to no purpose; the garrison remained uninjured; and his own soldiers were driven back with great loss from every attempt, although supported by the showers of stones which were hurled upon the besieged from the "*grands mangonneaux*," constructed by the orders of the Duke.

Despairing of success by open warfare, the Duke redoubled his exertions to seduce Pierre Ernault from his allegiance to England, proffering him vast sums of money, and many estates: but ineffectually; his integrity was incorruptible. "The garrison is not mine," said Pierre to the envoy of the Duke; "and the property of the King of England I cannot sell, alienate, or give away, without proving myself a traitor; which I will not, but remain faithful to my liege lord, upon whose hand, when he appointed me governor of this castle, I swore by my faith to defend it against all men, and to yield it to no one who had not his authority to demand it from me; and Pierre Ernault will keep his oath until he dies!

Carry this answer to your master; no other shall he ever receive from me." At last, the Duke of Anjou, finding that all his attempts to batter down the walls of Lourdes, or corrupt the honesty of Ernault proved abortive; raised the siege, and retired, mortified and disgusted with his ill success.

But, although Ernault had thus gallantly defended the castle of Lourdes against the French army, and forced it to retire with disgrace from before its walls; he had still another, and more dangerous enemy to dread, whose most anxious wish was to obtain possession of the fortress; and whose proximity to the place gave him every opportunity of pouncing upon it in some unguarded moment. This enemy was his cousin, the Count of Foix and Bearn. Prior to the repulse of the Duke of Anjou, the Count had never openly expressed his wish to become master of Lourdes; but, shortly after that event had taken place, he sent to Ernault, and requested him to come to Orthès, as he wished to have some conversation with him, regarding the state of the country. Ernault, dreading no evil on the part of the Count, although not altogether unconscious of

his designs, at once consented to the proposition.

Previous, however, to leaving Lourdes, he assembled the garrison together, and appointed his brother to the command of the castle in his absence. "John," said he to his brother, "the Count of Foix has sent for me, with what intention I do not know; but, if it is true that the Duke of Anjou and he have been entering into an alliance, and he seeks this interview for the purpose of getting me to surrender the castle to him, I shall in such case tell him, as I did the Duke, that while I have life the castle of Lourdes shall never belong to any one but the King of England. And you, John, who are now to take my place, swear to me by your faith and noble birth, that you will guard it as I have done, and never yield it to another than he who entrusted it to us."

John swore as desired, and Ernault proceeded to Orthès; where, a few days after his arrival, the Count of Foix made a formal demand of the castle of Lourdes; urging, as a reason of his doing so, that the Duke of Anjou had stated, that he (the Count of Foix) had caused the failure of

his expedition against that place by the support which he gave to the besieged; and, although this suspicion of the Duke's was perfectly unfounded, still, as he did not wish to incur the displeasure of so great a prince, he deemed it prudent to acquire possession of Lourdes.

Ernault undauntedly replied, though surrounded by enemies, among whom were many of the rebel barons of Bigorre—"Sir, I owe you duty and regard because I am a poor chevalier of your blood and country; but the castle of Lourdes I cannot yield to you. You have sent for me; I am here; and you can do with me what you please: but that which the King of England has entrusted to my care, to him only will I give it up."

"Ha! false traitor,"—cried the haughty and passionate Count, drawing his dagger—"Do you dare to speak those words to me? By that head thou hast not said them for nothing!"—and he stabbed Ernault to the heart.

"Monseigneur, vous ne faites pas gentilesse,"—said the faithful servant of England,—"vous m'avez mandé, et si m'occiez."

The death of Ernault did not, however, aid the

Count in his attempts to gain possession of Lourdes. John Ernault proved as brave and incorruptible as his brother; and, after the whole of Bigorre had been reduced, either by the French King, or by the Counts of Foix and Armagnac, the castle of Lourdes remained in possession of the English; and its garrison, unsatisfied with being merely able to defend themselves within its walls, were a continual source of dread and annoyance to their powerful neighbours, into whose territory they continually broke; and, while the armies of England were contending in the northern parts of Aquitaine and France, they carried terror and dismay through the counties of Carcassone, Toulouse, and the Albigeois.

The numerous little forts, the ruins of which appear in all the smaller valleys in the vicinity of Loudres, were the watch-towers which gave notice to the garrison of the approach of enemies, and secured to them, from the fertility of the districts in which they were situated, an abundant supply of provisions. These dependent fortresses often fell into the hands of the enemy, who wreaked their vengeance on them when they

did not dream of attacking the castle of Lourdes, —"Car Lourdes etoit un chastel impossible a prendre." And so it proved during the many changes of fortune which the English dominion in the south of France underwent; for the banner of England spread its folds in the Lavedan long after it had been torn from the strong places of Guienne and Gascony; and was not lowered from the citadel of Lourdes, until the English monarch renounced all right to these provinces.

The route from Lourdes to Pau lies along the banks of the Gave, which, sweeping round the outer ridge of the mountains, winds along their base. Here, although we are no longer among the mountains, we have something more to interest us than the recollections of their delightful valleys; for the aspect of the country, though changed in character, is still beautiful; and, after a long sojourn among scenes more wild and sublime, would charm even by its novelty. The river has now become a noble stream; and the rocky walls which confined its waters have been succeeded by green and wooded hills; farm-houses, orchards, and cottages, surrounded by oaks of "a hundred years," and magnificent

walnut trees skirt its banks, and waving corn-fields: the appearance of Indian corn,—the most gorgeous of all crops,—the increasing influence of the sun, and the absence of the cool breezes which neutralize his rays, indicate our near approach to the richest plains of the south; and that portion of the French empire to which the epithet "La belle France," can with truth be applied.

France, I believe, has been compared to an ugly picture set in a beautiful frame; and, from my own observation, I should not hesitate to say, that the simile is a most correct one. Some few spots there are, no doubt, in the interior of the country, well worthy of admiration; but, for how many hundred miles must we travel to reach them, and how distant are they from each other! and, after all, when they have been discovered, who that has gazed upon the surpassing beauty and magnificence of the frame, and the varied character of its workmanship, will not agree with me in declaring that those natives and foreigners who have formed their opinions of "France pittoresque" from the scenery on the banks of the Loire (the "garden of France," as a part of it is

absurdly styled), or any, or all of the "charming spots" so thinly scattered through the interior of that extensive country, can have but a very inadequate conception of the high rank which France, by reason of the glorious frame in which she is encased, is entitled to hold among picturesque countries.

After passing the curious old town of Saint Pe, whose monastery was founded in 1032, by William, Duke of Gascony, the hills upon the right of the road become gradually lower, until, at Betharam, they have entirely disappeared, and the rich plains of Bearn stretch out before us. Betharam is a college for the education of young priests; and famous throughout the surrounding country for the pilgrimages which are made to the Calvary, situated upon the little wooded hill which surrounds it. The sanctity of this spot is very great, and throughout the whole season, numbers of devotees may be seen winding their way up the steep ascent of the mount, kneeling, and repeating the prescribed Pater and Ave, at the various *stations*, or chapels, in which are most extraordinary and grotesque-looking

groups of figures in wood, intended to represent the passion of our Saviour.

In the month of September, when the *fête de la Vierge* attracts the whole population of the country to this holy hill, the scene which the place presents is of the most curious description. The roads, and fields, and woods seem then alive with dense masses of human beings, all directing their steps towards the Calvary of Betharam. The various colours of their picturesque costumes, —the gay capulets of the women, the flowing sashes of the men,—and, above all, the chanting of their hymns, which they sing in chorus, render the spectacle animating and interesting. A long line of tables fringes the bottom of the ascent, covered with holy trinkets of every kind,—rosaries, crosses, rings, and amulets, all blessed by some holy father, nay, even by the Pope himself, if we were to believe the assurances of the venders: at which each pilgrim makes a purchase according to his faith or his ability.

The ascent of the Mount is then made; some parties displaying their devotion by performing the journey barefoot, or on their knees; others,

whose sins hang less heavily on their consciences, hurrying over the ceremony as fast as possible, that they may return to their friends, who, having already piously relieved themselves of their sins, are rejoicing over the event in the village below. Feasts are prepared in all the cabarets, and there the sad and weary pilgrims of the morning, disburdened of their last year's load of sins, are transformed into light-hearted and joyous peasantry; the sacred hymn into the convivial glee; and every countenance is beaming with gladness.

Towards evening, groups are seen assembled under the trees, dancing to their rustic music, or singing in bands; and, when the day of mingled penance and rejoicing is drawing to a close, the various parties wend their way homewards, still singing and rejoicing, and completely forgetting the vexations or misfortunes of the year gone by, in their anticipations of the happiness of the ensuing one.

From Betharam to Pau, the country is a perfect garden in cultivation; and the inhabitants preferring to associate together, rather than reside in scattered hamlets and cottages, the road is almost a succession of villages and houses. One

of the largest of these is Corraze, a few miles from Betharam, upon the heights above which, are the ruins of the chateau in which the younger days of Henry the Fourth were passed, and where by the hardy life which he led, and joining in the games and sports of the peasantry, he inured his body to fatigue, without which he could not have survived the hardships of his riper years, and acquired the love of his subjects, who never failed him in the hour of need, nor deserted him in his misfortunes. "I would," said the young prince of Bearn, ever anxious for the welfare of his people, "that the poorest peasant of my country could put a fowl in his pot upon Sunday." And they had never cause to lament the futility of his promises. His memory is still idolized by the people, and although "les murs qui l'ont abrité, les edifices qu' il a construits, disparaîtront; mais la memoire de ses hautes qualités, de ses bienfaits, ne s'effacera plus. Voilà le sol qu' il a longtemps foulé de ses pieds nus; les montagnes, les bois qu' il a souvent gravis, haletant et couvert de sueur; et les hameaux, ou pressé par la faim, il se réfugiait pour manger la pâte ou la millade du paysan beárnais, qui partageait gaiment avec son

Henri." Few kings were so well beloved by their people as the Prince of Bearn; and still fewer have left behind them so good a name as the "bon Henri."

From Corraze to Pau is but a very short distance; and this, the ancient capital of the Bearn, is beautifully situated upon a high terrace overlooking the Gave, and commanding a fine prospect of the surrounding country. Pau is not only interesting on account of the many historical recollections connected with its name, and the distinguished station which, from the earliest periods of European history, its counts, and princes, and kings, have held among the potentates of the continent, and the early institution of a limited monarchical form of government; but, from its situation in one of the richest and most abundant countries in the world; and in one of the finest climates; its environs comprising all the loveliness of vine-clad hills, and sunny dales, green meadows, and fertile fields, and gardens, and copses, and orchards.

These attractions have, for many years, rendered Pau a favourite place of exile to those English who fly to a genial clime in the pursuit

of health, or to economize, where markets are excellent, and provisions cheap; and no other town of the south can be compared to Pau for those advantages, for there is none other that can boast a less changeable climate, and where the varied luxuries of a southern climate can be obtained at less expense. The chief desideratum of Pau, as a place of residence, is the want of comfortable houses, such as are to be met with at Tours, and other towns of France where the English colonize themselves. There are few single houses to be had; and *flats*, if disagreeable at home, are ten times more so abroad. The streets of Pau are, besides, inconveniently narrow, and, for a great part of the year, abominably dirty, sadly deteriorating the purity of the pure mountain air which surrounds the town.

There is, however, one section of the town far superior in comfort and appearance to the rest; and there I would advise any one who may decide upon residing in Pau, to choose his abode. This is the south side of the Rue Royale, which is built upon the edge of the terrace above the Gave. There there is less noise and bustle; and the purest air, and the most splendid view to the

south, east, and west, that can be imagined. Below is the extensive and wooded plain of the Gave, broad and open to the east and west, where the windings of the river are traced and lost in the distance, but narrowed and contracted to a mile in breadth opposite to the town by the numerous low hills which, running out laterally from the mountains, and divided into numberless small valleys, ravines, and dells, resemble a succession of mighty buttresses, intended as a support for the great mountains behind them. These hills, chequered with copses, and the vineyards from which the red and white wines of Jurançon are produced, and adorned with country houses,—border the noble plains beneath. Higher and more distant hills succeed them; and, above the whole is seen one long-continued range of summits, of most fantastic forms, from the Pic du Midi de Bigorre,—forming a promontory on the east,—to the inferior mountains which, beyond the valley d'Aspe, gradually decrease in height as they approach the ocean. Among the most distant summits to the east may be distinguished the glaciers of the Neouville and the Vignemale, sparkling in the sun; and, at the head of the valley

d'Ossau, which opens immediately to the south of Pau, the Pic de Gers, the masses of the Eaux Bonnes, and the gigantic fork of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau, the most picturesque-looking of all the Pyrenean mountains, are conspicuous in the outline of this magnificent and unequalled amphitheatre.

The society of Pau, like that of most other towns which is composed of chance visitors, can scarcely be characterized; the general rule, however, which more or less applies to every small continental town in which a few English families have domiciled themselves, is applicable to Pau. A few families constitute a society so limited and contracted, that it is seldom pleasant or agreeable; and, no matter how worthy and excellent the component parts of it may be individually, still, when taken together, they fail in one material point—unity; and, instead of that good feeling which we should naturally expect to exist among the natives of one country residing in a foreign land, we invariably find the reverse, and the little "body politic" divided into as many sects and parties as there are in the Christian religion; each party, its occupations and amuse-

ments, forming a topic of criticism and discussion to the others.

Among the families residing at Pau during the period of my sojourn in the neighbourhood of the Pyreneés, was that of a Hanoverian Baron. From the society of this esteemed individual I derived much pleasure. The Baron's early life had been spent at the court of George the Third, with whom he was an especial favorite, and many an anecdote has he told me of the "good old King's" eccentricities, and very sensible dread of "Charlotte." Although, perhaps, somewhat out of place in these volumes, I cannot resist the inclination to glean a few characteristic incidents from the Baron's recollections of their Majesties.

George the Third, like Frederick William, of Prussia, had a great admiration of tall and handsome men, and seldom selected an aide-de-camp or attendant who was not in stature fit to be a grenadier. Possessed of these essential qualifications together with the advantages of high birth, the Baron became the "shadow" of His Majesty, and in company with another equally well favoured countryman, attended him in his walks; no light duty, considering how very fond

he was of pedestrianism. On such occasions His Majesty, when he met with any one who he did not think had seen the Hanoverians, would immediately introduce them, precluding the introduction with such expressions: "Have you seen these gentlemen before?" "Have you ever seen such men?" &c., &c. To be shown off in this manner was sufficiently annoying to my friend, whose companion, on the other hand, enjoyed the distinction. The powers of memory possessed by the royal family of Great Britain are proverbial; George the Third had never resided in Hanover, yet the knowledge which he had of his subjects there, and of their family history, was wonderful, so much so that there was scarcely a single family of distinction with whose history he was not to the full as well acquainted as the family themselves were. The following anecdote displays the goodness of his heart, and the awe in which he stood of his royal spouse. The Baron commanded a regiment of cavalry who wore the enormous jackboots then in use. Somehow or other it entered into His Majesty's fancy to have a pair of these boots, and he accordingly applied to the Baron to have them

made by the bootmaker of the regiment; and had his measure taken. The bootmaker, either from having little assistance, or anxious to do justice to His Majesty's boots, did not finish them for some days; but so very eager was the King to have them, that he never failed each morning to visit the maker, and to inquire how they were progressing. When they were at last finished, and he tried them on, they fitted so very well, and pleased him so much, that, turning to the bootmaker, he asked him if he had a family. "Yes, your Majesty," answered the man, "I have a wife and family in Germany."

"Very well," said His Majesty, giving him eight guineas, "send that to your family, it may be of benefit to them."

So delighted was the King with his boots, that it was his first desire to display them before the Queen, and, accompanied by the Baron, he made his appearance before her. Strutting forward, and kicking his legs right and left, he said, "Well, Charlotte, what do you think of my boots, are they not beautifully made?" Her Majesty paid the desired compliment, upon which the King whispered, "I gave *four* guineas for them."

One other of the Baron's anecdotes I cannot help also relating. It regards the honesty and integrity of a Hanoverian soldier. In the campaign of ——— a soldier of the German Legion was brought before a court martial, accused of having drawn his sword upon his officer. The fact was proved and the articles of war awarding death as the punishment in such cases, the soldier was sentenced to be shot. The Baron, who was a member of the court, happening to be acquainted with the history of the man, stated his knowledge of circumstances greatly to the credit of the offender, and obtained leave to mention them. It seemed, that after a previous campaign, and when the greater part of the German Legion was ordered over to England for the winter, many of the officers of that corps, trusting to the honour of their men, allowed them to return home, taking along with them their horses and accoutrements, upon their simple engagement to join their respective regiments when called upon. One reason for granting this indulgence to the soldiers was the great dislike which the Hanoverians had to English barracks. The troops were unexpectedly called out, and in some,

although not in many cases, the confidence of the officers in the men was found to have been misplaced. The regiment to which the man before the court belonged, was directed to assemble at a particular port, for embarkation to England ; and soldiers on leave received orders to join. Owing to some mistake, the offender had no order sent him to join, and several days elapsed before he accidentally became aware of the circumstance. He however, lost no time, but mounting his horse, set off for the place of rendezvous. Upon arriving at it, he found that the regiment was gone. He followed it to the coast, at some distance from which he encountered two soldiers of his own corps returning homewards. He accosted them, and inquired if it were not true that the regiment was at a certain port, and that the transports would soon sail. They answered in the affirmative, adding that the vessels had already sailed, and that they, profiting by the confusion, had taken the opportunity to return home.

"Sapperblew!" sâid he to them, "do you mean to desert?"

"Certainly, to return home," said they.

"Well," answered the individual before the court, "you may desert, but at all events you shall not steal the horses;" and drawing out his pistols, he threatened to shoot them dead if they did not instantly dismount, and give him up the horses. The deserters, well aware of his character for bravery and determination, obeyed him, and resigned their horses. Taking the extra horses along with him, he proceeded to the coast, where he found that the transports had sailed. What was he to do? Was he to return home? No; he would still endeavour to join his corps. Fortune favoured his resolve, for he heard that there was still another transport lying at some distance along the coast, which was waiting for some of the "gentlemen of the Guards." He set off for it, and having reached it, he reported himself to the captain, at the same time stating the circumstances which had prevented him from sailing along with his own regiment. So delighted was the captain of the transport with the soldier's honesty, that notwithstanding that his ship was only intended to convey infantry, he put himself to considerable inconvenience, and received the man and his horses on board.

In the meantime the regiment to which the prisoner belonged, had arrived in England, and upon its muster-roll being called over, each individual who did not answer to his name was noted down as a deserter. When the prisoner's name was called, and not answered to, a corporal of the regiment stepped forward, and requested that he might not be put down as a deserter. "I am certain that he is no deserter," said he, "and that ere long he will make his appearance." The corporal was asked the reasons for his believing that the missing man would return, which, now that the regiment was in England, was so improbable a circumstance. He said, that he was sure that no order to join had been sent to his friend, but independent of this he had another stronger reason for believing that his comrade would return. It seemed that he (the corporal) had, when the regiment was disbanded, given to the missing man the loan of his watch, who for some reason or other wished to make an appearance at home; "and if it was for no other reason than to return me the watch," said the corporal, "I am positive that he will soon be here." Upon this statement the prisoner before the court was

not noted down as a deserter. The ship he was on board arrived in England, and being put on shore, and having discovered where his regiment was quartered, he joined it, with the watch and the three horses, to the astonishment of many, but amply justifying the character which the corporal had given of him.

The members of the court martial were so pleased with this simple statement of facts by the Baron, that they unanimously and strongly recommended the prisoner to mercy. I ought to have mentioned, that the crime which the man had been found guilty of, had been committed when in a state of intoxication, and when, from the effects of a severe wound in the head, he became ungovernable. The Duke of York, a short time previous to the sitting of this court martial, had issued an order, that any recommendation to mercy in such cases should not be attended to. The court nevertheless did recommend the prisoner to mercy, and the Duke sent back the proceedings of the court, at the same time desiring it to sit again, and revise the sentence. The court martial sat again, but the articles of war were so decided that they could not find otherwise than

they had originally done. The same sentence of death was awarded, but along with it, and regardless of the Duke's order to the contrary, a recommendation to mercy, if possible, still stronger than the former, was forwarded to the commander in chief. The result was, that the sentence was commuted to transportation to the West Indies. The Baron told me that he had once received intelligence regarding the soldier, since he was sent to India, where, in the course of a short period, he had been promoted to the rank of sergeant-major, "but," added the Baron, "I am afraid that the climate, or the strong drink will have killed as fine and noble a fellow as ever wore a sabre."

The town of Pau originated from the circumstance of a chateau being built by one of the princes of Bearn, in the tenth century, to protect his territory from the incursions of the Moors of Spain. For this purpose, he obtained from the inhabitants of the valley d'Ossau, the land upon which to build his fortress, on condition that their descendants should enjoy the privilege of occupying, during the sittings of the national assemblies, the first place in the great hall of the castle

which he intended to erect. This right being yielded, three stakes were driven into the ground, to mark the limits of the grant. Stake in Bernais is called *paou;* and, from these stakes, the castle and town which rose around it, derived their name, now corrupted into Pau.

The situation of the castle is at the extremity of the terrace on which the town is built. The ancient fortress of the Princes of Bearn has been succeeded by the more modern chateau of the Kings of Navarre; an irregular mass, flanked by towers and pavilions of unequal height; by no means remarkable in appearance, but rendered sufficiently interesting by historical recollections, and the grandeur of the prospect from its walls. The most antique-looking part of the building is the square tower of brick, near the principal entrance, said to be the birth-place of Henry IV., whose cradle, made of tortoiseshell, preserved in the chamber where it was first used, is a relic dear to every true Bearnais.

Bernadotte, King of Sweden, was a native of Pau; and began his career of life as apprentice to a baker. In 1780, he became a soldier; and, in 1818, "*il passa roi*"—the expression used by

the soldiers of the empire, as accustomed to see their commanders made kings as generals. The house in which he was born is situated in one of the inferior streets of the town, and the event is recorded by an inscription over the door. Although Napoleon said, that "Bernadotte a été le serpent nourri dans notre sein;" with what justice is a matter of opinion: still he has not, like most other men who have risen from a humble to an exalted station, been so intoxicated with his prosperity as to forget his poor relations, most of whom he has provided for, and rendered comfortable in life.

The climate of Pau is perhaps the most genial, and the best suited to invalids, of any other spot in France. There are there no such sudden changes, such transitions from heat to cold, as at Nice or Montpellier, nor piercing cold winters as at Tours; indeed, the almost continual fine weather is only broken for three weeks or a month in the beginning of January by the winter rains, accompanied by slight frost; but the snow is seldom visible a few hours after it falls; and the heats of its southern latitude are tempered by the vicinity of the mountains, in whose cool recesses,

those who feel the summer sun too oppressive, can in a very few hours take refuge. The nearest watering-places of the Pyreneés to Pau, are the Eaux Bonnes, and the Eaux Chaudes ; and thither we shall, in a subsequent chapter, conduct the reader.

CHAPTER XIX.

Pyrenean Horses—Their character—Conjectures regarding the Race—The Haras—Breeding of Horses in the South—The ignorance of the French upon the Subject—Expense and inefficiency of the Haras—Cheapness of Horses—Great Fairs—Horsedealers—Mode of Bargaining—Spanish Mule Dealers—Their Fine Appearance—Number of Mules Exported from France into Spain—Price of Mules—String of Mules—Extreme Honesty of the Spanish Mule Merchants—Horse-races in the South—Their Character—Vanity of the French—Description of a Fox-hunt.

In mountainous districts, we generally find a race of horses, small but active, and, therefore, better suited for the work they are required to perform. Accordingly, along the whole line of

the Pyreneés, and even throughout the vast plains which extend from their base, we find a species of small, wiry, and in general, exceedingly ugly animal to predominate. For what length of time this may have been the character of the horse in the most southern provinces of France, it would be difficult to discover; but if I might be allowed, without any authentic information on the subject, to hazard a conjecture, I should suppose that the same description of horse has existed for a very long period. In a country so hilly and mountainous, and where, until very lately, even in the most populous and richest districts, good roads were altogether unknown, the small and active animal was the one most efficient for carrying to market the produce of the country. Almost all the cross-roads are at this day little better than the channels of the streams and rivulets, where even the ox-cart cannot ply its sluggish course. Every article must, therefore, be transported on horseback; and as the horse is seldom or never made use of for agricultural purposes, it is almost certain that from the period when beasts of burden were first required by the natives of the Pyreneés, that the species of horse at present in

use there, would be the kind sought after by them.

To Pau, Tarbes, and to all the other towns in Bearn and Bigorre, three parts or more of the corn, maize, and other produce of the country are brought to market upon the backs of horses, hundreds of which may be seen, upon market-days, passing along the roads, each carrying its compliment of sacks. Divided as the soil is into small proprietorships, each owner of an arpen of land possesses a horse, without which it would not be possible for him to dispose of even the small quantity of grain and vegetables which he cultivates. At an earlier period, I imagine that the breed must have been more like our Highland poney; but the government of France, with the view of improving the race, have established *Haras* in each of the departments. These Haras are well worth visiting, not so much from the character of the horses they contain, as from the care which is exhibited in the management of the establishment. In some of these stables there are above fifty stalls on a side, neatly divided and arranged. The ceiling is in general lofty, and a most perfect system of cleanliness

pervades the whole. So many horses together, and so well kept, even although not remarkable for their beauty, form a sight to be admired. But notwithstanding the great expense attending these haras (some of them costing above ten thousand pounds a year), the benefit derived from them has been very inconsiderable.

In the breeding of horses, the French are very ignorant, for hitherto they seem to have imagined that the quality of the stock does not, in the least, depend on that of the dam. Consequently each peasant possessed of a half-starved disproportioned animal, brings her to the haras, and although the sire may be English, Norman, or Arabian, the progeny is very little, if at all better either in appearance or in usefulness than the mother. I am rather inclined to believe that the consequence has been to deteriorate the native breed, and to introduce a race of slight *weedy* creatures, infinitely worse adapted for burden than they must have been previous to the introduction of the haras. Besides the peasant could not afford to keep a good horse until he could sell it to advantage. He has neither the means, nor the inclination, and it would not suit the purpose for

which he requires it; so that the only advantage which has hitherto been derived from these haras has been now and then obtaining a few horses for the cavalry. Thus the French, as well as the English, can boast of their sinecure and unprofitable establishments.

Horses, such as they are, are nowhere cheaper than in the neighbourhood of the Pyreneés; their prices ranging from two to five hundred francs. A few of the larger mares from which the peasants are in the habit of breeding mules, fetch the highest prices, but twenty pounds is in general considered a high price for a *cheval de pays*. At any of the great fairs of Pau, Tarbes, Oleron, &c., a very tolerable hackney may be procured for twelve or fifteen pounds; and as there are few of the gentlemen known in England as horsedealers, to be met with at these places, it is not requisite that the purchaser should be a perfect connoisseur in horseflesh, in order to avoid being taken in. The peasant, in general, brings to market the horse which he wishes to dispose of, and the only rule to be observed in dealing with him, is invariably to offer him not more than one-half of what he demands at first;

for it seems to be an established custom with the peasantry, whenever they have any article to sell, to ask double its value; or rather, they expect the buyer to offer what he thinks its value, instead of their fixing the price themselves, and then abiding by it.

There is a great deal of amusement to be had at some of the great fairs particularly at those held in the towns adjoining the Spanish frontier. There are then assembled together individuals from all parts of the two countries, dressed in their various costumes, speaking many different languages or dialects, and altogether dissimilar in appearance. But the erect, haughty, and in general, fine looking men from the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, will invariably be found the most interesting class. Some of these men are so very remarkable in their appearance, that frequently, in the midst of a fair, and when bargaining for a horse I have been elbowed by one of them, my attention has been withdrawn from my more immediate pursuit to contemplate a nobler creature, and to regret that so fine a people as the Spanish, should, by bad government and religious domination, be reduced to their present deplorable

situation. The Spanish character is, as I have before observed, generally misunderstood, and too frequently belied. Those who declare them to be exclusively a haughty and vindictive people, seem to forget that they possess such qualities as gratitude for benefits, which no time nor change of circumstances can efface; and an anxiety to make amends, when they have acted or judged wrongly, which their eagerness to atone for by attentions and kind offices never fails of evincing. The Spanish character must not, as is almost always the case, be drawn from the manners and conduct of the nobility, in general a degraded class, altogether unworthy of their country, and as unlike its fine peasantry in personal appearance as they are inferior to them in the qualities of the mind and heart.

The number of mules exported from France to Spain, is immense. Several thousands of these animals may be seen at any of the great fairs, almost the whole of which are bought for the Spanish market. These mules are of various sizes and prices, and some of them very beautiful; their sires are the magnificent Spanish asses which are brought into France. The price of

these mules depends upon their strength and size. A pair standing about sixteen hands in height, cannot be purchased for less than forty or fifty pounds. The females always sell considerably higher than the males, on account of their tractability; being much less obstinate, and performing their work more willingly. The strength and endurance of these fine animals (one or two of which are generally to be seen in the team of the heavy roulage, or carrier's carts) is prodigious; but the mules bred in France are intended for the Spanish market, and with the exception of the above instances, it is only the very inferior animals which are retained in the country. It is no unfrequent sight to witness upon the great road, a Spanish mule merchant, mounted on horseback, with fifty or a hundred of these animals, tied in pairs, trotting after him. The respectability of these Spanish merchants is so great, that they are trusted to any amount in France. This, considering the disturbed state of the country, and that no redress could be had, should they violate their engagements, is sufficient evidence as to their character.

There are annual horse-races at Tarbes, and

other of the Pyrenean towns, established by the government with a view to improving the breeds. I went to these races, expecting to find them much inferior to the worst *cock-tail* meetings at home; but, on the contrary, I found them wonderfully good, considering the little knowledge which the French have of the *science*, and the still less enthusiasm with which they indulge in it. So little do the people of the country care about beholding this sport, that they never, as in England, assemble in great numbers to witness it; in fact, it is altogether foreign to them. Horse-racing and fox-hunting are amusements which belong exclusively to England; the French never have distinguished themselves in either, and never can. Of their fox-hunting I shall now give an account.*

The vanity of the French—that ruling principle in their national character, which leads them to estimate every thing produced by their country as infinitely superior to every other — prevents them from adopting many of the comforts and substantial improvements which

* It may not be improper to mention, that a part of this chapter has already appeared in a periodical.

have been the results of experience and wisdom in other countries, and also from participating in the enjoyments of their more active and manly amusements. France is a large country, and in its many provinces there exists a wide and marked difference in the manners, language, and character of the inhabitants, amounting, in many instances, almost to a total dissimilarity; but throughout them all, this national vanity, this idea of superiority of intellect, this self-love and self-flattery, is inherent. It flourishes alike in the cold regions of the north, and in the more genial climate of the south; it is the one great and all-powerful chain which binds opposing parties and conflicting interests together, in every instance, and upon all occasions, where "La belle France," her honour, real or imaginary, is threatened with assault. They will uphold different political parties—they will aim at different forms of government—they will support a despotism, a mixed constitution, or a republic—a Louis Philippe, a Henry the Fifth, or a Bonaparte—as it may suit their wavering and uncertain minds; and each and all of these factions will find, among the throng, partizans to shout the "vive" for them; but let the cry of "Vive la France!"

be raised, and, for the moment, all rivalry, all party animosity, will appear to cease; and the enthusiastic acclamations which rend the air will tell a tale from whose moral each successive power that has ruled over the French nation for any length of time, has learned to gild the chains with which it fettered the people; and, by throwing around its acts the flimsy but effectual web of nationality, to unite under it all sects and parties, moulding them to its will. Thus it has been, and thus it will continue.

The church and the ancient aristocracy of France (which, but for their own narrow policy and consummate folly, might still have remained) are now gone; and each individual who aspires to wear the laurel-wreath entwined for him by the fickle fancy of the moment, must, if he wishes to retain it, bear well in mind the ruling foible of the people whom he would govern. Upon this as the only resting-place among the shoals and whirlpools which surround him, threatening him each moment with destruction, he must lay the foundation of all his actions; and he may, for a long, a very long period, rule over the most capricious nation on the face of the globe.

But what has all this moralizing to do with fox-hunting? Why, it has more than may at first appear; for, although the French do ape us in many matters, still their confounded vanity prevents them doing so to the letter; and, consequently, they bungle and destroy, where they might, were they less conceited, have become worthy and successful imitators—and so it is in *fox-hunting*.

The notions which the French have regarding this true English sport, are so very antiquated, that they are, in all probability, derived from some fox-hunting cavaliers who accompanied Charles the Second in his exile; for I imagine that it was before, or about that period, that their practices existed in England, if they were ever known there at any time.

Long ago, in England—

> "Our squires of old would rouse the day
> To the sound of the bugle horn;"

and, upon the same principle which led them to do so, I suppose the French act in the present day; and no arguments, no expostulations drawn

from the practice in the land of fox-hunting, will induce them to alter or improve their mode of going to work. "It is not so in France," is the universal and conclusive answer. Thus, whoever wishes to go French fox-hunting, must make up his mind to tumble out of bed by half-past four, or five, at the latest. Should it rain while he is dressing, he may go to bed again, for, in their opinion, the scent will not lie at all; and should a shower or two fall in the course of the day, the faults and mistakes committed, whether on the part of the huntsman or the dogs, are most knowingly laid to the account of the weather.

I have seen one or two dogs good enough to have held a respectable place, even in an English pack; but the generality are good for nothing. They never hunt with what we should call *courage;* but potter about like a parcel of pigs in an Indian corn field. Often have I been amused by observing some of them, when unable to pick up the scent, sit down on their hind quarters, and, with their noses in the air, composedly "bow-wow" away at the skies, instead of endeavouring to recover it, forgetting the new maxim of the politicians—*aide toi.* But one cannot,

considering their training, blame them for this. In one particular, I think they are superior to our dogs, and that is, that their notes are even more musical than those of our dogs; but this, I believe, is owing to the climate—for I have been informed that English dogs, after having been some time in France, acquire the same melody of sound. They are totally dissimilar in appearance: there is the heavy, strong, muscular animal, more adapted for a bear-hunt; the long-backed, greyhound-looking brute; and a cur, something like the beagle—in sweet confusion blended. The owner hunts them himself, and has a whipper-in, or "piqueur," as they call him, mounted; and sometimes another on foot. The hunting party must now be described; but they are sometimes so ludricrous in appearance, so oddly (at least to the eye of an Englishman) attired, mounted, and accoutred, that I fear I may fail in conveying a vivid impression of their appearance, which, indeed, beggars all description. To be justly appreciated, and sufficiently admired, it must be seen. Oh! what a despicable figure the gentlemen of any of our crack hunts would cut along side of these worthies! Their heads are

crowned with a three-cornered, 'fore-and-aft-looking cap of fur, of cloth, or of oil-cloth, with huge "fall downs" to cover the ears, and studded and illuminated all over with glittering steel buttons. A black stock, with a piece of whitish linen peeping over it, incloses the throat; and a green, dark brown, or velvet cut-away coat, and underneath it a bright crimson waistcoat, adorned with chains and clasps, and numberless odds and ends, and a broad leathern belt, drawn around their waists, dignify the upper man. Light coloured inexpressibles, of cloth or worsted cord, buttoned at the knee, or tied at the ankle; the enormous jack-boots of the Russian courier, or French gendarme; or an imitation of our own hunting-boot, but substituting a polished leather top for the one which we prefer; with a pair of spurs, which, in length and size, would mock even those of our old mosstroopers—complete a costume which is neither to be met with nor equalled any where, save in France. I have also seen French officers turn out in full uniform, sword and altogether; and ladies with their horses' tails elegantly twisted in their cruppers, to preserve them from the mud.

The quality of their horses being of little consequence in their style of hunting, some are mounted upon nags of sixteen hands high; others upon what, in the Highlands of Scotland, are called "shelties." As to their saddles, some are demi-piques; some have, and some have not, cloaks or greatcoats fastened in front or behind, either to preserve them from the weather, or in their seats; a pair of holsters (the most sensible part of the whole), one containing a loaf of bread, and the other a flask of wine; and cruppers—that deformity to a horse, without which you seldom or never see a Frenchman ride. A few of the party frequently augment these incumbrances to their horses, by the addition of a "cutty gun."

There are generally two horns to a pack, the one carried by the owner, or a friend, the other by the piqueur. These instruments have a mouth of at least a foot and a half in diameter; and when not in use, are suspended in the same manner as our shot-belts, by thrusting the head and one arm through the centre of their coils.

In the neighbourhood of Pau, there is an immensity of the very finest cover. Both gorse and copse, in abundance, perhaps too much;

there is, therefore, no lack of foxes. One of the most frequent places of rendezvous for the pack which hunt the part of the country to which I particularly allude, is a place called the Bois de Pau. It is a wood, consisting of perhaps a couple of hundred acres, cut up and intersected in all directions by wide alleys and avenues. The French have no idea of a "run," their chief object being to accomplish what we call "mobbing in cover;" and this, to give them justice, they do set about in a most business-like manner. The dogs are thrown in a corner of this large wood, and instantly the hunters, like "knowing" old sportsmen in pheasant or woodcock shooting, gallop off to the different openings to guard them, and prevent Reynard, should he be inclined to break cover, and, if possible, to head him back into the woods; at the same time, never failing, if they have a gun, to salute him with a shot. A fox is generally found here, and after having been perhaps twenty or thirty times fired at and wounded, he is, in a short period, either most barbarously killed, or run to ground. Scampering up and down the alleys, or upon the road, and bawling and shouting, afford great amuse-

ment to the hunters; but of leaping, or going across the country, they are guiltless. The shots are frequently as likely to take effect upon some of the party as upon the ill-used fox; and one day, a cantonnier, at work upon the road, was all but struck by a ball fired in the wood.

Sometimes, when they run a fox to ground, they unearth him, and turn him out on some other day. Upon one occasion, they thus acquired as fine a fox as I ever saw; and we (the English) had some hopes of having a good day's sport with him. There is some very pretty country for riding across in the valley to the south-west of Pau, abounding in fences, but none of a very difficult nature; and we urged the master of the hounds to unbag him there; but our entreaties could not overcome their insurmountable objection to leaping, and the master resolved to turn him loose in the same place where he was found—their favourite haunt, the Bois de Pau. This fox was a fine catch for them; but not satisfied with admiring each other's feats of noisy brawl and hardy daring in the field, they were determined that the fair sex should have an opportunity of admiring their

achievements. But, as all this took place during the carnival—the dancing and quadrilling period of the year among the French—it was some time before a day occurred upon which the ladies, sufficiently refreshed by a night's rest, could accompany their cavaliers to the chase. Thus the period of the imprisonment of this unfortunate victim, was lengthened out beyond the fortnight; during which time he was fed high, and put out of wind.

Secure of finding a fox, and their gallantry forbidding them to disturb the ladies at so early an hour as their usual time of starting, eleven o'clock was the hour fixed upon, and the everlasting wood the place of rendezvous. A friend and myself were among the last of leaving Pau, to join in the feats of this eventful day; and, in crossing the extensive *landes* which separate the town from the wood, we overtook the individual who, in a basket upon his head, was conveying the fox. Of course, we were much disgusted at the mode of proceeding, and I voted for upsetting the basket, and giving Reynard his liberty, at least a couple of miles from the wood, as he might, perhaps, take an opposite direction

-to it, and the hounds being brought and laid upon the scent, we, in all probability, would for once see something to bring home to our recollection, But my sagacious plan was overruled, and the man and his burden were allowed to proceed in the even tenor of their way.

Upon arriving at the wood, we found the assembled host, on "dreadful thoughts intent," waiting anxiously for the coming of the object of all their hopes and wishes. We pleaded hard that twenty or thirty minutes' *law* should be given him. But no; the hounds were to be slipped upon him the moment that he started. The basket was set down, and the lid lifted; when I observed that the fox was attached, by a chain, to the inside (which would somewhat have deranged my plan of upsetting the basket upon the landes), and he was so fierce that they could hardly untie it. To accomplish this, they let him get half way out of the basket, and then squeezing the lid down upon him, they, with less danger from his teeth, managed, after having, I have no doubt, broken at least two or three of his ribs, to give him his freedom.

But, to my astonishment, they had resolved to

make a dandy of him; and for that purpose, had adorned his neck with a huge collar, with loads of small bells attached to it. This was horrid! In fact, he only wanted the tea-canister to his tail, to complete his costume. The chain being unloosed, he went off in great style, his bells jingling like those of a posthorse; and, before he had made a hundred yards, away went the dogs after him. No sooner had the dogs started than all the French party galloped off, not after them, but before them, leaving them to hunt in the best manner they could; forgetting, or unconscious, that the most beautiful and most *intellectual* part of a fox-hunt, is that, when the dogs, either having met with a check, display their sagacity and tact in recovering what the French call the "*quête*," and having succeeded, send forth the heart-stirring and joyous notes which tell us of the fact; or when, with their heads no longer at the earth, they sky along, breast high, causing the woods to ring again, and seeming to repeat the words of the old song—

"Follow who can—oh, then! oh, then!

Breaking from the patch of wood to which he had made at first, he was headed, in the next alley, into another division; and thus it continued, for about twenty minutes, out of one square into another; until, at last, being driven into a corner and mobbed, he was either killed by the dogs, or frightened to death by the hubbub. I think the latter must have been the cause of his death; for, when I came up to the spot, I found him seemingly uninjured by the dogs: but, at all events, he was, as the criers in the streets say, "most barbarously murdered." The body was then tied upon the pummel of the master's saddle, his head dangling upon one side, and his brush upon the other; so that passengers on either side of the road, or damsels gazing from the windows of the street, might not be deprived of a sight of the glorious trophy, nor ignorant of the prowess by which it had been acquired.

This was what the French call "*une grand chasse.*" As only one half of the wood had been disturbed, the remainder was "drawn" for another fox: but without success. The owner of the pack, upon this, observed to me, "that it was no use drawing any more covers, as there had been rain in

the morning." I thought of the "Fox and the Grapes;" and said that, in England, frequently, the very best runs took place on rainy days; and, not only was such the case, but I had more than once had my red coat made white with snow upon days on which I had seen very fair sport. "*Mon Dieu! mais c'est tout a fait different en France.*"

The hounds of Tarbes are much better, and the owner takes considerable interest in them. He has a court-yard behind his house, along one side of which is a double range of berths, each large enough for two dogs, and in which his hounds are kept exceedingly dry and clean. M. Dupont, the proprietor, who is a very polite person, frequently invites the English at Pau to come and have a few days' hunting with him; and, what is rather unusual for a Frenchman, he never fails to give them one or two most excellent dinners.

Wolf and hare hunting are his favourite amusements; for, although to oblige us he would sometimes hunt a fox, still he is averse to it; as he thinks that the scent of the fox being so much ranker than that of the wolf, it spoils the dogs for

the latter sport. I was not so fortunate as to be present at a wolf-hunt with his hounds.

The wolves are frequently driven down from the mountains by the snow, and take refuge in the woods of the low country; and the peasants, when they see them there, inform M. Dupont of their presence. The wolf is a more difficult customer to deal with than the fox. He is hardly ever killed by being fairly run down by the dogs. Very few instances of wolves being so killed are known; although runs of this kind have been known to last a day and a night—the dogs following the same wolf for that length of time. On this account, the hunters always endeavour to wound or cripple him, so as to put him upon a more *equal footing* with the dogs; and, accordingly, every one, upon such occasions, is armed. Even when wounded, the wolf, if he is a strong one, will hold on for three or four hours; during which time, both dogs and horses, if their riders will follow, will have had enough of it. Oh! that I could see a first-rate pack of English dogs laid upon a wolf's track! It would, indeed, be a sight worth seeing. He would find an enemy

worth contending with; one that would not permit him,—as is frequently the case,—when having gained upon his pursuers, and aware of his superiority over them, to rest himself composedly until they come up, and then start off, as fast and as fresh as ever; but, that would hang heavy on his heels, nor quit him until their strength failed them, or they had him in their fangs. It would be a glorious sight!

But, to return to M. Dupont's hounds. Afraid that we should not get out of bed early enough, M. Dupont had ordered his piqueur to come to our hotel about four in the morning, and "blow us up" with his great horn. About five, the master and his hounds, and a party of French gentlemen arrived, and we, being all ready, joined them. There were symptoms of rain; and, in the dusk of the morning, each of our companions being enveloped in a waterproof cloak, or great coat, the assemblage looked more like a detachment of monks going to a funeral than a party of jovial hunters. Our master of the hounds, a most enormous man, could not, with jack-boots, great coat, blunderbuss, holsters and all, ride under one and twenty stone. He was mounted upon a small

chesnut mare, with legs like those of an elephant, and it was amazing to see how she moved under the prodigious weight she carried.

In hare-hunting, they have a tolerably good reason for disturbing one's sleep so early in the morning. There are (as every peasant carries a gun, and every man and boy in the whole country spend half their time in shooting) very few hares, and, consequently, the difficulty of finding them in their forms is very great. To obviate this, they endeavour either to come upon puss when she is actually feeding; or, if too late for that, skirting all the spots where she has been likely to do so, to come upon her scent, and track her to her form. This is a very good plan, if pursued soon after she has been feeding, but it will not do any length of time after she has gone; and, of course, if a hare is not found before eight or nine in the morning, she will not, in all probability, be found at all. Hare-hunting is not worth describing, because every body knows what it is, and few people care for it. But the scene which took place upon our return home was too laughable to be passed over.

Before entering the town, we were requested

to ride in a body; and the day having become fine, great-coats and cloaks were all doffed, and strapped to the saddle-bows. Our companions, of whom during the day we had seen nothing but their faces, were now transformed into exquisites of the first water: and so completely indeed had they protected themselves from the rain and mud, that they looked more as if they had just finished their toilet than been exposed to the annoyances of ploughed fields and splashing roads. As for us, we resembled a parcel of half drowned rats, who would willingly have sneaked into their holes to avoid the vulgar gaze which the presence of such gay cavaliers could not fail to attract; but, as we were told that our leaving the troop might be thought disrespectful to the master, we courageously faced the approaching exhibition. There are,—as I observed before,—generally, two of these abominable French horns in a hunting party, the one carried by the piqueur, the other by the master, or a friend. M. Dupont's nephew was the bearer of this—to the ears of a sportsman—most disagreeable instrument; and he rode at the head of the party: while the piqueur, with the dogs and

the other horn, brought up the rear, In this manner, we rode into the town of Tarbes, our leader halting at each turn or winding of the streets, and sounding the "*Tantara*" for a few seconds; after he had been answered by the piqueur, with the other horn, from the rear, he moved on again, thus giving warning of our approach, and affording all the inhabitants plenty of time to come to their windows, and admire us. Glad were we, when the neighbourhood of our hotel permitted us to escape.

CHAPTER XX.

Superstitions of the Bearnais, and Haute Pyrenean Peasantry—Remnants of Ancient Mythology—Zeal in celebrating their Religious Ceremonies—Pilgrimages—Disregard of the Decrees which abolished Religion—Character of the Inhabitants of Bearn—Ancient Laws of their Country—Dislike of the new Laws of Division—Various Superstitions of the Mountaineers—Ceremonies at their Marriages—Superstitions of the Roussillon Peasantry—Celebration of the Mysteries—Processions of the Flagellans—Processions of the Semaine Sainte—Poetry and Music of the Pyreneés.

In the Pyrenean departments,—into whose mountain districts civilization progresses with but slow and tardy steps,—the manners and customs of the people are but little altered from what they were centuries ago. In the neighbourhood, indeed, of the watering-places, the

tastes and the habits of the peasantry are fast changing; and there, the greed of gain drying up the springs of their native kindliness and generosity, the stranger is only welcomed according to the price which he can pay for his entertainment. But, away from these emporia of demi-Parisien vice, the Pyrenean peasantry still retain their pristine simplicity, religious feelings, and hospitality. In the humble cabin of the shepherd will be found many traces of the olden times; and, in the superstitions of its inhabitants, remnants of the mythology of the earliest periods, mingled with the fables and customs of the middle ages; and, left in a great degree stationary, although in the vicinity of civilization, they have preserved their virtues, their customs, and their traditions.

Excepting in a few valleys in the mountains of the Basque country, where Protestantism prevails, the inhabitants of the Pyreneés are Roman Catholics. No people are more attached to their sacred rites; and they solemnize, with zeal, the great religious festivals, and practise with much care the lesser observances of their creed. If, during a market, during the labours of the field,

in the midst of the most animated rejoicings, or of their favourite dances, the bell of the neighbouring hamlet announces the hour of prayer, the traveller stops, the labourer abandons his spade or his plough, the rejoicings, the dances cease, and every one kneeling down, they offer up their prayers.

Threatened by the tempest, the sailor from the shores of Aquitaine, Languedoc, or Provence, turns his thoughts to his village altars, and implores the Virgin to intercede for him, and restore him to his parents, or his wife and children. The most pompous of the Catholic ceremonies delight the people of the Pyreneés, and the longest and most fatiguing pilgrimages are made in order to be present at them. I have already taken notice of the "Fete de la Vierge" held at Betharam, whose chapel and *Calvaire* are the most celebrated throughout Guienne, and to which the peasantry of Bearn and Bigorre, upon the eighth of September, may be seen to the number of many thousands, wending their way. I have also noticed the pilgrimages to the lonely chapel in the wild valley of Héas, and those to St. Bertrand, which last are not only attended by the inhabi-

tants of the surrounding country, but by hundreds from the Spanish valleys.

The inhabitants of the Pyreneés, favoured by their situation, and their distance from the metropolis, and induced by their religious zeal, paid little regard to the decrees of the Revolutionists forbidding the observance of religion throughout the empire; but, comparatively safe from persecution in their mountain fastnesses, supported their pastors in their religious administration, and bade defiance to the authority of the commissioners sent to shut up their churches, and punish them for their contumacy.

The character of the Bearnais peasantry is exceedingly well portrayed by M. du Mège. He says—"Les Béarnais ont un caractère qui ressemble à celui des peuples qui les environnent: ils sont en général fins, dissimulés, méfians, intéressés, envieux, irascibles, et jaloux de leur liberté. C'est un peuple spirituel, propre a tout ce qui demande de l'intelligence et de la souplesse, et dans lequel on remarque un air de fierté, de civilisation et de politesse, qu'on ne voit point ailleurs. Dans les vallées, il a l'esprit plus delié, et un physique plus robuste; il tient à sa religion,

sans être fanatique ni intolérant. Le deployement de la puissance l'étonne peu ; mais il est naturellement soumis aux loix. Son orgueil et son irascibilité le portent facilement à la vengeance ; mais, contenu par la crainte de la fletrissure et de la perte de son bien, il fait éclater son ressentiment par les moyens judiciares. Lorsqu' il est vaineu, il est plus humilié du triomphe de son adversaire, que sensible au dommage qu' il éprouve : nulle partie du Departement ne donne autant d'occupation aux tribunaux.

"Les mœurs des Béarnais sont douces, même celles des habitans des montagnes, lesquels, forcés par les neiges de descendre, et de passér l'hiver avec leurs troupeaux dans le plat pays, s'y policent, et perdent leur rudesse naturelle. Rarement des crimes atroces déshonorent les habitans de cette contrée : les rixes des cabarets, la violation des règlemens ruraux et forestiers, y sont les délits les plus fréquens."

There are many causes which have contributed to form the character of this interesting people. Their ancient constitution was singularly favourable to liberty, compared to that of the people of the interior. The early division of the soil ren-

dered nearly the whole of the population labouring proprietors; and, even now-a-days there is scarcely any one who cultivates another's land; and, in almost every instance where additional labourers are required by the proprietors of the larger vineyards, the individuals employed are the Spaniards from the frontier provinces who emigrate to France in search of work. No wonder that the Bearnais peasantry are a joyous race, and the burdens of life hang lightly upon their shoulders; they are the cultivators of their own land, and they know that *they* alone will reap its fruits.

The order of succession established by the ancient laws of the country, and which perpetuated the comfort of the families, by preserving their paternal acres, although limited, secured to the industrious cultivator a competence, and preserved his independence. The climate also influences in a great degree the character of the Bearnais; its mildness aids him in his labours, while its steadiness, giving him confidence that they will be repaid, renders him cheerful and contented.

The laws of Bearn, remarkable for their wis-

dom, founded upon the respect of persons and of property, contain many maxims of the purest morality. They were very favourable to paternal authority. They obliged a son, living in comfort, to maintain his father, if he was poor. They desired a father to settle in marriage his daughters, in preference to his sons, and dispensed with his endowing a child who had wandered from the paths of virtue. They reprobated idleness as the mother of vice, and they punished very severely those who were guilty of perjury, deceit, usury, theft, and other crimes. There is also a law which does much honour to the Bearnais; it regards the great respect paid to females in child-bed. They prohibited any seizure being made in a house during their confinement, and until ten days after the birth of their children. No nation was more aware of the truth of the maxim, that good laws insure good manners.

Each individual was at full liberty to dispose of those goods which he had himself acquired; but lands acquired by succession were unalienable but by the third generation. They could not be sold without the authority of the judge, and but from absolute necessity, and even then

only the fourth part could be sold. The right of primogeniture was in full force; but, at the same time, there were certain provisions for the younger children. The natural effect of this arrangement was, that the eldest son, aware of the rights of his brothers and sisters, and that, in the absence of funds to pay their portions, the burden would fall upon the estate to which he would succeed, wrought hard during the lifetime of his father, and saved money to pay off the family provisions. These provisions enabled the females to contract suitable marriages with heirs of a fortune almost equal to that of their brother. The younger sons, on the other hand, married heiresses, who brought to them not only their provisions, but the sums which their father or brother had given them, to induce them to work at home until their marriage. These provisions generally consisted of a certain number of cattle bred among the herds of their father or brother.

Such were the ancient laws of the country; to which the inhabitants are still so very much attached, that, in general, the fathers, by means of fictitious sales, convey the property to their eldest sons; and, in a great number of families,

the younger sons never avail themselves of the advantages bestowed upon them by the new laws of division. In the Basque country, in particular, the peasant preserves, with a sort of religious veneration, the patrimony of his fathers.

The successive political revolutions have not effaced the superstitions and customs of the early ages. The fountains, the lakes, the rivers, are still in some degree the objects of veneration to the inhabitants of these provinces, who throw into their waters pieces of silver, of food, and of raiment.

On the eve of St. John, they wash with the dew their eyes, or other parts of their bodies, weakened by infirmities; and those who have any disease of the skin, roll themselves among the heaps of corn wet with it.

They bestow the name of *Loup-Garou* on a most changeable spirit who appears in various forms, sometimes as a dog, remarkable for its whiteness, at the spot where four roads meet; sometimes dragging chains, the echo of which is heard at great distances.

"Do you wish for the riches of this world?" say the Bearnais, "pay your homage to the fairy

who resides in a cavern beneath the oak of Escout: there deposit a purse, invoke the Supreme Arbiter of your destinies, and retire. Return in a few hours afterwards, and you will find your purse full of gold and silver." They even point out persons who have acquired their fortunes in this manner.

They are also acquainted with the ceremonies practised by the Druids, in regard to certain plants. If an infant is attacked by a fever, his nurse, believing that medical aid will be fruitless, invokes a stalk of wild mint as the divinity who can succour her; to it she makes an offering of bread covered with salt, and, addressing it in rhyme, repeats the ceremony nine times. The plant dies; and the child is cured.

They also believe, that, by carrying certain sacred plants about them, they are preserved from every evil.

Fennel is, among the Bearnais, the plant whose kindly influence is a protection against evil spirits. I recollect a peasant pointing out to me a variegated leaf, the spots upon which he declared had been caused by some drops of the

Virgin's milk which had been spilt upon them while suckling our Saviour.

Sarrante is consecrated to the Virgin; the faithful who go there to offer up their devotions, bring back a piece of the rock. The same custom is common in the valley of Héas, where each pilgrim carries away a fragment of the "Caillou d 'Araye.'

They draw inferences, lucky or unlucky, from the songs and flights of birds, or the howling of dogs.

When they hear the cry of the screech-owl they fear a misfortune; the peasants then throw salt into the fire to prevent the accomplishment of the threatened evil.

If a magpie while chattering looks at you, or turns towards your habitation, you ought to hope for something lucky; but, if it crosses your path, or flies to your left hand, it predicts evil.

The number thirteen is unlucky. There are persons who will not sit down to a table with thirteen guests. The number three is lucky.

At the entrance to the valley d' Aspe may be seen a large conical stone; "les femmes vont y

frotter leur ventre, quand elles sout frappées de stérilité."

The birth of a child is the occasion of many ceremonies. The moment it is born they throw out of the window corn, or pieces of money; and, when the infant is carried to the baptismal fount, they place upon him a morsel of bread, which is given to the first person they meet.

When a marriage takes place, the companions of the bridegroom are called *donzelous*, the friends of the bride *donzelles*. The bride is conducted with great pomp to the house of her husband, generally preceded by a lamb adorned with streamers; and nuptial songs are sung. The procession stops at a little distance from the house of the husband, and a party is sent forward to treat with the father-in-law. Soon after, the procession moves on, and arrives at its destination. The nuptial songs are redoubled; corn and other fruits—tokens of abundance—are thrown in at the windows; the doors are opened, and, in the midst of joyous shouts, the wedding-cake, carried by the friends of the husband, is divided among the relations and friends of the bride.

In some parts of the Hautes Pyrenees there exist confused recollections of the fables of the middle ages. The fairies, *Hados*, strange beings, called also sometimes, *las Blanquettes*, occupy a conspicuous place in the popular superstitions. The peasant believes that they are sometimes seen dancing by the mysterious light of the moon, sometimes upon the summits of the mountains, sometimes upon the ancient towers, or in the verdant meadows. Flowers spring up where their feet have pressed the sward; they increase or diminish the storms at their will; and shower down benefits upon those who render them sincere homage. Some of them inhabit the interior of the Pic de Bergons, and change, in an instant into the finest thread the flax which has been left at the entrance of their solitary abode. In the valley of Barousse (the least known, perhaps, of all the Pyrenean valleys) during the night which precedes the first day of the year, the fairies enter the houses of their devotees. They bring happiness in their right hand, in the form of an infant crowned with flowers, and misfortune in their left, represented by another infant, who weeps. The peasantry have been

careful to prepare in a clean and empty chamber, the repast which they wish to offer their guests. A white cloth covers the table upon which is placed a loaf, a knife, a jug of water, or of wine, with a cup and a candle in the midst. They believe that those who offer the best food, may hope to have their herds increased, their harvests abundant, and that marriage will crown their dearest hopes; but those who fail in these attentions to the fairies, and who neglect to make preparations worthy of the spirits who come to visit them, may expect the greatest misfortunes; fire will consume their dwellings, wild animals devour their flocks, hail will destroy their harvests, or their infants die in the cradle. Upon the first day of the year, the father, the eldest person, or the master of each house, takes the bread which has been offered to the fairies, breaks it, and after having dipped it in the water or the wine, contained in the jug, distributes it among the family, and also among the servants; after this they wish each other a good year, and breakfast upon the bread.

The peasantry on the banks of the Garonne suppose that the inundations of the river are

occasioned by wicked spirits bathing in its springs; and blame them as the cause of the rains and thunder-storms. When the late but abundant harvests of the valleys are suddenly destroyed, *l'Homme Noir*, an evil genius, is seen hovering upon the summit of a neighbouring peak, shaking from his immense wings the hail-stones which have blighted the labourer's hopes.

When a flower is seen to bloom among barren rocks, in places destitute of all other vegetation, it is in general thought a certain omen of an abundant harvest throughout the country. When a tree spreads its branches over the roof of a house, it is believed to predict all kinds of misfortunes to its inhabitants; that the sons will die in distant lands; that the mother will not find comfort in her daughters; and the father, forsaken by his children, and abandoned by his friends, will live to old age in wretchedness and poverty.

Many omens are drawn from flowers. When a rose is left alone upon its thorny stalk, and when it bends towards a house, it predicts the death of one of the inhabitants.

There are many curious ceremonies to be wit-

nessed at marriages and births. In the commune of Massat the bride breaks away from the procession conducting her to her husband's abode, and flies for refuge to a house which her companions, armed with swords, undertake to defend (these girls are called *espaseros*, from the weapons which they carry); soon after, the companions of the bridegroom, armed in the same manner, come and besiege the house, and after a suitable resistance, the *espaseros* yield, and the besiegers carry off the bride in triumph.

But one of the most beautiful sights to be beheld in the south, is the illumination which takes place on the eve of St. John. Every height is then crowned with fires; hundreds of them may be seen at the same instant, and the whole country appears in one blaze of light.

The mountaineers, as I have mentioned in a former chapter, pay great respect to the fountains; they even make offerings to them; and, in some districts, when the snows have melted they assemble at the first appearance of the morning star, and climbing to the top of a hill, place themselves in a circle, and wait in silence for the rising of the sun; as soon as it has appeared, the

most aged of the group begins to pray, while the others attend in silence. After having prayed, the shepherds allot the pasturages and cabins, and separating, form their colonies; each colony elects its chief (a dignity invariably bestowed upon hoary locks), who bears the name of *le pere, le vieux;* then the chiefs, assembling together, swear to love God, to render assistance to travellers and wanderers, and to offer them milk and fire, and the use of their cloaks and cabins, to reverence the fountains, and to take care of the flocks.

The superstitious observances which I have now related, are but a tithe of those which exist in the central and western departments of the Pyrenees. In Roussillon, where the people are entirely Roman Catholics, and far more Spanish than French in their manners and character, the remnants of the old religious ceremonies and sacred rites are more frequent in their occurrence, and more perfect in their observance. The most interesting and remarkable of these ceremonies are the dramatic representations, called *mysteries;* and which, practised very generally throughout Europe at one period, and now succeeded by our

modern drama, are still extant in Roussillon and part of Spain. These religious theatricals are performed in the language of the department. The legend of the patron saint, to which the parish church is dedicated, usually forms the subject of the piece; at other times it is taken from the Bible. *La Presa del Hort* (the capture in the garden), is one of the most common; the play begins with the creation, and concludes with the death of our Saviour. The costumes of the actors are most ridiculous, and it is by no means uncommon to see a black-bearded man performing one of the female characters. The theatre is generally raised in the *place*, and in character and comforts very much resembles those of our strolling players. Planks resting upon chairs, tables, or benches, form the seats for the vulgar audience; while the aristocracy of the place, at the expense of a few *sous*, are accommodated with seats upon a higher platform. M. Henry gives a curious description of these Roussillon theatricals, in his observations upon the *Mystère de Sainte Basilice, et de Sainte Julien;* he represents to us the Saint Felicio dressed in a coat of changing colours above an embroidered vest of such length

as nearly to cover his thighs, with white silk stockings, gold buckles, and his hair powdered; which, says M. Henry, "sous la main du perruquier, avoient pris un certain air de frisure, étoient légérement couverts de poudre; je dis légérement, et ce n' est pas sans intention, puisque ce fut par convenance que le coiffeur n'en mit pas davantage; en effet, quelqu' un lui ayant demandé pourquoi il ne poudrait pas complètement Felicio, il lui répondit d'un air capable: Ne voyez-vous pas que c'est un *Romain?* Notre Romain, donc, en père noble, et en habit gorge de pigeon, n' avoit pas oublié la canne à pomme d' or, et il en faisait un usage fort indiscret, car il ne manquait pas d'en frapper le plancher à la fin de chaque *hémistiche;* en sorte que toutes les fois qu'il se trouvait en scène avec le père de Sainte Basilice et l' oncle de Saint Julien, qui en avoient aussi chacun une, leur déclamation étoit accompagnée d'un certain bruit cadencé, qui ne resemblait pas mal à celui que font les forgerons."

"Felicia, la femme de Felicio dans la pièce, et son gendre hors de lá, etoit un gros gaillard de cinq pieds cinq a six pouces, d'une robuste corpulence, et d'un teint brun fortement prononcé:

son costume consistait en une robe de damas jaune à grands ramages, de celles que portaient nos grand mères, ayant la queue, non pas retroussée par les coins, passée à travers l'ouverture des poches, mais pendante, car la taille du personage m' empêche de la dire traînante. Son col était emboîté dans une colerette à grands canons, et sur sa poitrine velue brillait une lougue chaîne d'or; des pendeloques à la Catalane, c' est-a-dire, descendant jusqu' aux épaules, tenaient à ses oreilles, et ses cheveux frisés, et copieusement poudrés, malgré sa qualité de Romaine, étaient surmontés d'un diadème de carton couvert de papier doré. Pour adoucir le teint de sa peau, on avait chargé ses joues d'une forte couche de rouge de cinabar, en sorte que l'ensemble était d'un effet difficile à imaginer."

Before the Revolution, there were annual processions, the members of which were called *flagellans;* from the manner in which they beat themselves; half naked, and covered with blood, they ran about the streets, lacerating their bodies with whips, or cords with small bullets or pieces of iron attached to them. Towards the end of the last century the clergy and magistrates of the

province wished to abolish these over-zealous exhibitions; but the force of custom prevailing, these processions were, after a short time, again renewed. In the early times of the Revolution, when the links of society were broken, and all authority disregarded, these frantic scenes were renewed to an excess which had never before been witnessed; numbers of *flagellans* took a part in all the processions; and what was still more extraordinary, each company of the National Guards had its own particular *flagellan*, who followed his comrades in uniform, with his taper in his hand. The dress of the *flagellan* consisted of fine white cloth, with flounces trimmed with black ribbon or lace; a large opening was left at the back of this dress, ornamented with gay ribbons; and a huge hood, four or five feet in height, was kept upright upon the head by a cone of paste-board; upon the feet were worn white sandals embroidered with black, and in the right hand the *flagellan* held a whip formed of little cords, at the extremities of which were attached small pieces of iron or sharp-pointed silver stars, at each stroke of which the blood sprung from the body of the penitent. To make the blood flow

plentifully, care was taken to rub with warm towels the parts which were to be struck, in order to heat the skin, and draw the blood towards it. Slight punctures were then made with the point of a lancet, so that the wounds, when struck, might bleed abundantly.

There is one other singular ceremony in Roussillon, which is practised during the last two nights of the *Semaine-sainte*, which considerably astonishes strangers. Processions are formed of numbers of men dressed in black gowns, tucked up with a white cotton cord, to which is attached an enormous rosary, with hoods on their heads like those of the *flagellans;* each of these penitents carries a taper, and they are arranged in two files, which the *regidors*, or masters of the ceremonies, keep in order. In front of the procession is borne a banner of black damask, fringed with silver, and surmounted by a cross; two smaller banners, also black, are carried, upon which are represented the various symbols of the Passion; and at intervals, figures nearly as large as life, emblematical of the sufferings of our Saviour. In the centre of the lines of penitents, are children, also clad in black, and bearing little

banners of silk embroidered in silver. To these are added a Roman centurion, accompanied by his soldiers (called *estafermes* in Catalan) supporting a standard with the four letters S. P. Q. R. *(Senatus Populusque Romanus)* embroidered upon it; and the priests of the different churches in their surplices, carrying tapers; this extraordinary assemblage is rendered still more grotesque by having players on bassoons among their ranks, and four or five violin players following the priests. Some idea of the procession upon the first night may be formed from this description.

Upon the second, they carry a cross of such large dimensions and great weight, that in order to preserve its equilibrium, they are obliged to walk very slow. The privilege of carrying this crucifix is eagerly contested; he who obtains this honour, must needs be of more than ordinary strength, or he will very soon resign it; the smallest stumble is sufficient to throw the cross from its equilibrium, and in falling, wound those in its neighbourhood. Upon this occasion, they also carry the tomb of Jesus Christ, upon the upper part of which, the Saviour is represented as dead, and lying in a bed, the coverlet of which

is generally of crimson velvet, enriched with tassels and fringes of gold; the sheets are composed of the finest linen, and the pillows trimmed with lace. Formerly the ornaments of these processions were of Gothic workmanship, now they are entirely changed, and modern taste has introduced the designs of the different objects displayed in these nocturnal exhibitions.

These ceremonies, although somewhat grotesque, are still exceedingly striking to one who for the first time beholds them. The slow march of the extraordinarily dressed groups, indistinctly seen by the light of the tapers, and a few torches which accompany them, the dark masses of the spectators, and the waving branches of cypress which they carry, render the spectacle sufficiently imposing.

The mountains have generally been the asylum of the Muses; and nowhere have they been more favourably received than in the Pyrenees. Each district can boast of its native poets, and its peculiar songs, many of them remarkable for their beautiful simplicity and depth of feeling. Cradled among scenes of the wildest beauty, within hearing of the avalanches, the whooping of the eagles,

and the roaring cataracts, it would be strange indeed, if the imagination of those so situated were not excited, and poetry did not flourish, where nature has done so much to engender it. The productions of the Pyrenean shepherds, far less known than they merit, have proved their country to have been a

"Meet nurse for a poetic child,"

and that while watching their flocks during the heats of the day, and the silence of the night, they have not been insensible to the objects around them—but in the solitude of the lonely cabin, they could give vent to their feelings in strains full of passion and tenderness. The subjects of their lays are most frequently the faithlessness of their mistresses, the love of their country, the death of one of their flocks, or other simple, but to them affecting incidents. These give birth to their effusions, which, although often irregular in their style, are not the less beautiful and interesting; and they only require a man of genius—a Walter Scott—well read in the traditionary lore of the mountains, to collect and arrange them, in

order to render them most acceptable to the public.

The airs of the Pyreneés are not less remarkable for their beauty than for their spirit. Many celebrated composers have acquired fame, and in the theatres of the capital been applauded as the authors of airs of Pyrenean origin. Garat, the famous singer, in particular, had often recourse to the music of Roussillon to charm his auditors ; but, well aware that in France, nothing would be acceptable without a foreign recommendation, he had the precaution to set Italian words to the music which he received from Perpignan ; and those airs were then admired at Paris as the production of the virtuosos of Milan, of Rome, or of Naples, whose author had died unknown among the Pyreneés.

CHAPTER XIX.

Valley of the Neiss—Its great Beauty—Source of the Neiss—Valley d'Ossau—Marble Pillars in the Church of Bielle, and Anecdote of Henri IV.—Laruns—Route to Eaux Bonnes—Village of Eaux Bonnes, and Mineral Springs—Its Environs—Hunters of the Valley d' Ossau—Fine Appearance and good Character of its Peasantry—Best Period for Hunting in the Pyreneés—Izard and Bear Hunting—Narrow Escape of a Friend on a Hunting Excursion—Unsatisfactory Pursuit of a Bear and Cubs—Fonda "le pere des Chasseurs de la Valleé d'Ossau"—Appearance and Character of the Man—Stalking of an Izard—Results—Driving of a Herd of Izards—Result—Presence of Mind of Pyrenean Hunters—Numerous Herds of Izards—Valley of Sousouel—Construction of a Hut—Arrival of our Provisions—Fonda's Adventures, and Death-bed Scene of his Father.

THE beautiful little valley of the Neiss opens immediately to the south of the town of Pau, and along the banks of its stream is the road to the watering-places of the Eaux Bonnes and the

Eaux Chaudes. Of all the valleys in this district, that of the Neiss is the largest; its scenery of woody dells and vine-clad hills is the most pleasing and varied; and the gorgeous views of the mountains, which are seen from many parts of it, the most striking and interesting. Leaving the village of Jurançon on the right,—where, under the shade of the great oak-trees which separate it from the road, the ever joyous Bearnais peasantry may be seen "tripping it lightly" upon Sundays and holidays,—the road crosses the bridge over the Neiss, and enters the valley.

The road for the first few miles is so perfectly straight, and bordered by Lombardy poplars of prodigious height, that it appears to be an avenue of most imposing grandeur, of which the termination is the gigantic forked peak of the Pic du Midi d' Ossau; which, conspicuous by its situation, and its peculiarity of form, is, among the many objects which here draw the attention of the stranger, that of the most absorbing interest. Here the most extreme fertility prevails; Indian corn, the staple produce of the soil of Bearn, flourishes in the fields by the river-side; chateaux and farm-houses, surrounded by their vineyards

and copses, hang upon the low hills which skirt the valley; and hundreds of little valleys, or rather glens, stretching away upon both sides, in whose secluded nooks the white-washed cottages of the peasant proprietor, half-hid among their fruit trees and vines, seem placed so as to overlook his little domain, add greatly to the rich-looking and delightful appearance of the valley. A few miles beyond the village of Gan, the valley narrows so much as to leave scarce sufficient space for the river and the road, and assumes the character of what in the Highlands of Scotland, would be called a *pass*; the resemblance to which is much increased by the quantity of heath which on every side displays its purple flowers.

At the village of Rebenac, the road again crosses the river, and begins to ascend the ridge which separates the valley of the Neiss from the valley d' Ossau. Before arriving at the summit may be seen the source of the Neiss, which, like many other rivers of the Pyreneés, bursts forth at once into a considerable stream from a cavern in the limestone rock. After crossing this ridge, the road winds along the banks of the Gave

d'Ossau. The green and wooded hills of the Basque country are seen bounding to the west the rich plains of Arudy; and, at the picturesque little village of Louvie, we enter the valley d'Ossau, and become enclosed among the mountains which on either side hem in the valley. Here, as in the valleys of the Lavedan, the excellence of the climate permits the inhabitants of the mountains to cultivate their little patches of grain, at elevations where, in other countries, the heath or the fir would scarcely be able to struggle with the blasts; and villages, hamlets, and solitary chapels, are scattered among the slopes and shelves of the mountains.

In this valley, there are quarries of white marble, which, in early times, were wrought to a great extent. In the church of the village of Bielle, the altar is surmounted by four columns of the native marble. These columns were esteemed so highly by Henry IV. that, when adorning his chapel of the Louvre, he sent to request the inhabitants to present them to him. The answer returned to his Majesty was somewhat singular. "Sire," said they, "you are the master of our hearts and of our fortunes; but,

with regard to the columns of the temple, they belong to God: demand them from Him."

At Laruns, the roads to the Eaux Bonnes and the Eaux Chaudes separate; the former following the windings of the stream called the Valentine; the latter, ascending the mountain to the magnificent *pass* of the Hourat.

The road to the Eaux Bonnes has only within late years become safe and practicable for carriages of every description. Like that to Luz and Barèges, its formation has been a work of great labour and expense, turning and winding along the banks and precipices, sometimes embowered in wood, sometimes scooped out of the solid rock, or built along its ledges, where the river may be seen tossing through its rocky channel hundreds of feet below, or dashing over the numerous cascades in which its course abounds.

Of the village of Eaux Bonnes no traces are visible until we are close upon it; and the fine road which we are passing along, at every bend of which we expect to see the houses of the watering-place, becomes gradually so labyrinthed among the surrounding and overhanging precipices and mountains, that we begin to despair of

the existence of any habitable dwelling-place, and imagine ourselves winding our way into the heart of the Pyrenean range, when a turn round a projecting crag discloses the little basin in which the houses and baths of the Eaux Bonnes are built. A more picturesque or extraordinary situation cannot be imagined than that of this watering-place; it is, as it were, engulfed among the mountains, whose precipices in many places form a part of the walls of its houses, and in others have been blasted in order to gain sufficient space to erect them.

The mineral waters are held in great estimation; and numbers annually arrive from all parts of France who hope to benefit by their medicinal properties, which first acquired their fame from the cures which they effected upon the wounded of the Bearnais soldiers whom Henri d'Albret led to the battle of Pavia. At that period, the waters were styled les Eaux des Arquebusades.

So hemmed in and inclosed, Eaux Bonnes, to the unfortunate who comes thither for the recovery of his health, must be a dreary place of sojourn, even in fine weather; in bad, I should think, almost insupportable: while, to those who

have only amusement to entice them to its seclusion, and whose constitution will permit them to seek for health among the wild mountain-scenery in its neighbourhood, — where the izard (the chamois of the Pyreneés) abounds, and the bear is not unfrequently to be met with,—it will, on the contrary, prove most attractive. Thus it was with myself, during the period when I resided in the vicinity of Pau; and the Eaux Bonnes was the head-quarters from which most of my shooting excursions in the Pyreneés were undertaken.

The chasseurs of the valley d'Ossau are justly considered among the most active and hardy in the mountains; and retain (with the few exceptions which the influx of strangers has occasioned) their native simplicity of manners and honesty of character. In appearance, there is no other valley of the Pyreneés whose inhabitants can compete with them; indeed, both the men and women of the valley d'Ossau are remarkable for the regularity of their features and handsome persons, which their original and most picturesque looking costumes render still more striking; and so kind and obliging, and free from prejudice are

they, that the wanderer in their mountains is not only certain of being well received by them, but the shelter of their cabin, and a share of their humble fare he will invariably have proffered to him, and his acceptance esteemed a favour. The cursory observer, who may have been cheated by some of the idle individuals who, at the various watering-places, are ever on the alert to impose upon the credulity of visitors, would sadly mistake the character of the Pyrenean peasantry, were he to suppose that such conduct is general; on the contrary, the more I have mixed among them the better I have liked them, and the higher has my opinion of them risen.

The early part of the season, and before the snows have so completely melted as to permit the sheep and cattle to return to the high pastures, is the most favourable period for hunting the izard and bear. The haunts of those animals are then undisturbed by the shepherds and their dogs; the izards are most frequently found in herds, and are less timorous, while there still remains a sufficient quantity of snow to enable the hunters, by tracking the footsteps of the bear, to discover his retreats.

Aware of this advantage of being early in the mountains, I repaired to the Eaux Bonnes towards the end of April; but the rainy weather, which afterwards prevailed through the summer of 1835. precluding the possibility of hunting, I was forced, after waiting in vain for its cessation, to return to the low country. In May I returned again to the Eaux Bonnes.

* * * *

One morning, after several days of unsuccessful hunting, which, in defiance of the rain and still more annoying mist which had almost constantly enshrouded the mountains, our eagerness to bring home an izard or bear had led us to undertake, the rattling of pebbles upon my bedroom window intimated that the hunters whom I had in my employ were underneath it. I was out of bed in an instant, and although so dark that I could scarcely distinguish the figures of my friends; still the first streaks of daylight shining above the mountains revealed the summits of the Pic de Gers, which since my return to Eaux Bonnes had been invisible. A few minutes sufficed for our preparations, and myself and two hunters were on our way up the mountain-side.

Hitherto we had gone out in parties, and the hunters acquainted with the passes by which the izards crossed from one summit to another, having posted one of us at each of them, made a sweep round the mountain, and endeavoured to drive the fleet little animals towards us. This is a savage style of hunting, and like all battues will not be relished by any one who entertains *liberal opinions* upon sylvan warfare. Upon this occasion, we were to endeavour to come upon the izards by stealth and cunning, the usual mode adopted by the Pyrenean hunters; or in other words, *stalk* them, as we do red deer at home.

The appearance of the morning was most favourable; not a speck of the mist was to be discovered, which had, with little interruption, hung upon the mountains for weeks, and whose presence had not only spoilt our sport, but upon more than one occasion had nearly proved fatal to some of our party.*

* Upon one occasion in which a party of us were upon the flank of the Pic de Gers, the mist became so intense that it was impossible to see a few yards in advance of us. I and a friend, who will not soon forget the circumstance, had accompanied one of the hunters to a favourite izard pass high up the mountains, when the

Excepting in the very early part of the season, the mountains in the vicinity of the watering-places are so frequently *shot over*, that the izards desert them for the more solitary districts; and accordingly passing through the gorges of Balourd, and along the naked flanks of the Pic de Gers, we proceeded

mist increasing very much, it was deemed prudent to descend as rapidly as possible. This we endeavoured to accomplish, but among the turns and windings of the path, our guide mistook the route which we ought to have followed, and we found ourselves *brought up* at the foot of a perpendicular wall of rock, by a sheet of half ice, half snow, which but a few degrees removed in steepness from the rock above, sloped down the mountain-side, and right across the path which we were pursuing.

These patches of snow, especially when their outer coating has become hardened, and will not yield to the pressure of the foot, are most difficult to pass; and the many slips and falls which we had already had in crossing them where a roll in the snow was all the evil to be apprehended, made us dislike the appearance of the present wreath—so very much steeper than any which we had ventured to traverse, particularly as, should any of us chance to slip in the attempt, the mist prevented us having any idea of the character of the descent we should make. The wreath might terminate at the edge of a precipice, among a mass of fallen rocks, or in a snow-plain; but to us who could only see a few yards down it, and could not explore its resting place except by descending it in a style which we would rather avoid, its nature was a matter of surmise.

We could not think of retracing our steps, we should have only bewildered ourselves among the rocks and snows which we had passed, and lost ourselves entirely. Accordingly I ventured upon

towards the little valley of Sousouel, into whose lonely pastures the flocks and herds had not, as yet, found their way. Although so far advanced in the season, there was still a great quantity of snow remaining upon the mountains; and in the higher regions, if it had not been for the hot sun which

the wreath, my friend and the hunter watching my success. A staff of any kind would have been of great assistance; in lieu of it I was most unwillingly obliged to substitute my rifle, and to drive its barrel deep into the snow, to enable me to cling to my slippery path, which I crossed in safety. The breadth of the wreath could not exceed twenty paces; yet when I turned to look back, I could not distinguish the individuals who were upon the opposite side. My friend followed, adopting the same precautions which I had done, but with less success; for just as his figure became visible to me, he slipped, and going down the glassy surface like a shot, disappeared in an instant. I never shall forget the sensation which I experienced at the sight, although it was but of momentary duration; for a cry at no great distance below intimated that he was safe. Crawling down the edge of the wreath I reached the place where a softer portion of snow had slightly yielded to his weight, and ended his fearful course. He was still only half way across; but after resting for a minute or two to recover himself, he again started, and passed the wreath in safety. The hunter, after some deliberation, crossed where I had done, and after wandering about for some time in the mist, we gained the lower valleys without farther accident.

I had the curiosity, some days after this event, and when the weather had improved, to ascend the mountains for the purpose of searching for the spot where it had occurred, and discovering what

beat upon our heads, we might have supposed that it was the month of January, from the wintry appearance of every thing around us. The snow was every where impressed with the traces of herds of izards, and we could frequently observe the deeply printed footmarks of the bear; in some places, where he had passed alone; in others, where a dam had been accompanied by her cubs. One of the latter tracks seemed so very fresh that we immediately set off at a brisk trot along it, and had followed it for several miles with apparent chance of success, when one of the hunters descried the objects of our pursuit at such a distance, traversing the steeps of the mountain above us, as completely to destroy our hopes of

would have been the result had my friend continued in his course down the snow wreath. After some little trouble, I found the place, and had it not been that the traces of our footsteps were quite fresh, I should have doubted the possibility of our having taken the route which we did. I mentioned that the wreath commenced at the foot of a perpendicular wall of rock; I now discovered that its resting place was a sloping terrace, which separated the foot of one precipice from the summit of another of fearful height; and that the spot where my friend had been enabled to stop himself, was within a very few yards of its edge, over which, but for the providential circumstance of one part of the snow being a little softer than another, he must have been dashed to pieces.

overtaking them. We watched them until they disappeared among the rocks, and then turned on our former course, regretting deeply that we had not crossed their path but one short half hour sooner. Shortly after we met a shepherd who was returning from Sousouel, where he had been to examine the state of the pastures, and from him we learned that the flocks would be on their way to it on the following morning; and the more pleasing intelligence, that he had seen many izards in the valley.

Upon receiving this information regarding the appearance of the flocks on the morrow, the consequence of which would be the flight of the izards to the higher summits, we determined not to return to the Eaux Bonnes that evening, but passing the night under shelter of a pine, or in a shepherd's hut, if the winter storms had left any of them standing, to have another day's hunting. This being decided upon, one of the hunters was dispatched to the Eaux Chaudes (the nearest village) to procure an additional supply of provisions; for in our hurry in the morning, we had overlooked the probability of our being absent for a couple of days.

The want of this man might have greatly inconvenienced us; for in the event of our discovering a herd of izards in a situation where it was impossible to approach them, it would then be necessary to drive them, and one man is not always able to do this. But, as good fortune would have it, he was scarcely out of sight ere we encountered another hunter, whose presence (for he at once agreed to join in our expedition) far more than compensated to us for his absence. Our new comrade was no less a personage than Fonda, "le pere des chasseurs de la valleé d'Ossau;" and he well deserved the high title which had been conferred upon him. Every peasant who carries a gun aspires to the honour of being a chasseur; but it is only when the stranger who would enjoy the wild sports of the Pyreneés has the good fortune to meet with such a character as Fonda, that he can thoroughly appreciate the merits of a genuine hunter, and imbibe from him the necessary qualities of coolness, cunning, and hardihood, to render him successful.

Fonda is a native of Laruns, and was, when I met him, sixty-six years old, and had from boyhood been a hero of the wilds. He can boast

of a descent more illustrious than many of the great ones of the earth; for he can trace his descent in a direct line from heroes, who, like himself, had roamed in freedom among nature's grandest works, unfettered by the trammels of what is styled civilized society, but bound by the stronger ties resulting from simplicity and kindliness of heart. He was, when we met him, following the traces of the bears, and intended remaining out for several days in pursuit of them.

The appearance of the man who would thus singly search for, and encounter an animal of such strength and, when attacked, of such fierceness, as the Pyrenean bear, deserves description. Somewhat above the middle size, he has the high features, the dark eyes, the flowing hair, and muscular proportions, which characterize the inhabitants of the valley d' Ossau. Exposure to the storms of heaven, and the scanty fare with which he contents himself, has given him a look of even greater age than sixty-six; and, to a casual observer, Fonda would appear a person ill-adapted for his profession. But, upon a little scrutiny it will be discovered, that it has neither

been ill health nor poverty which has withered the flesh upon his cheeks, and stamped the marks of age upon his countenance; the development of the muscles, the clear and fiery expression of the eyes, and the elasticity of the step, declare that Fonda is still a man of strength, if not of youth, and capable of enduring the exertions and fatigues of his pursuits.

In a pocket resembling the Highland Sporran, he carried his balls, powder, and other articles for his gun; and, in a small knapsack, a spare shirt, a pair of spartillas (to enable him to cross the slippery ledges of rock), and the few pounds of bread which constituted his stock of provisions for some days. Previous to meeting him, I had been remarking to one of the hunters upon the extreme length of his gun-barrel; but that which Fonda carried astonished me still more. Excepting the articles which our gunsmiths are in the habit of putting up as signs at their shop-windows, I had never seen any thing resembling them. Above two centuries ago, there was a forge in the vicinity of Arudy, and there all the barrels of this description were made. They are

smooth, and, although so very long, are exceedingly light, and have three or four *sights* along the barrel, not unlike those upon our rifles.

I asked Fonda how long it was since he had first possessed his gun; and he told me, that it had been the gun of his father, grandfather, and all his ancestors, since the period when it was manufactured. As a curiosity, it was a tempting one, and I offered him a sum for it which would have bought him a couple of new ones. It was a cruel offer to make a poor man, but it was rejected at once. The man and his gun were *in keeping*. Fonda, with a modern gun, would have appeared as ridiculous as the Gothic cathedral of Auch with its new Grecian columns; and it is not unlikely, that had he parted with his gun, and missed a few shots at first with the new one, that he would have thought it a punishment for having sold the heir-loom of his family; and, giving up his usual sports in disgust, died of a broken heart.

As soon as we entered the valley of Sousouel, we began to look eagerly for the izards which the shepherd told us he had seen. The track which the cattle and sheep have to pass, in order

to get to the valley, winds along a ledge of the mountain considerably above it. On a sudden, the youngest of my companions laid his hand upon my shoulder, and drawing me towards the edge of the precipice along which he was walking, whispered to me to look over. Immediately below me, at the distance of six or seven hundred feet, was the little river of Sousouel, swollen into a torrent by the melting of the snows, and upon a rock by the edge of it, like a seal on the sea-shore, lay a solitary izard, basking in the sunshine.

We instantly drew back, to consider how we were to get within shot of him. This was soon decided upon; and, after one more stealthy glance over the precipice, to satisfy ourselves that we had not disturbed him, we left the spot. When started, the izard would at once make for the mountains, and Fonda pointed out the path which he would take. We had to cross it in our descent, and it had been proposed that one of us should remain near it, to intercept him, should he escape from the other two, who were to approach him under shelter of the rocks below; but Fonda, tossing a lichen into the air, declared

that the wind was unfavourable for the pass, and that it would be useless to leave any one near it, —so extremely sensitive are the izards.

Our descent was extremely difficult, in many places very dangerous; but I was too eager upon the sport to waste a thought upon the subject. We were creeping down the steep in line; Pierre led the way, I followed, and Fonda came last; when, passing over a ledge of loose stones, one of them gave way under me, and I slipped and fell. I did not go far, but the stone rolled on, and I believed that all hopes of our shooting this izard were fled. Pierre saw the danger, and, regardless of the injury which he might sustain, deliberately laid his shoulder to the ground, to check the progress of the piece of rock. I dared not even whisper my thanks, nor ask him if he was hurt, so cautious was it necessary to be, and we kept our march in silence. We were still about a hundred and fifty yards from the bottom, when we found that we could descend no further, for, from the edge of the narrow shelf which we had reached, the precipice became too perpendicular to permit of our clinging to it.

I crawled along the ledge to a bend of the

rock from where we thought we might perceive the izard, and looking over, was upon the point of uttering an exclamation of disappointment, when I saw a block of stone which I supposed was that upon which I had first seen the izard, tenantless. I had mistaken the rock, for the izard was still there, dozing in fancied security. I had in my hand a double-barrelled gun, loaded with swan-shot, and Pierre was carrying my rifle. Forgetting what I was about, I fired one shot at him as he lay, and a second as he started from the rock. Both the hunters fired about the same time, and the izard—stood within a few paces of the rock from which he had bounded, perfectly unharmed, gazing around him, and wondering where the noise came from which had disturbed his slumbers! It was but for a moment; for he ascended the mountain directly towards where we were; he had not observed us, and took his accustomed path. I seized my rifle, and *slapped* at him, as he passed within a few yards of me, and missed. I tell this story of my own defeat upon the first occasion in which I had a chance of being successful in izard hunting, as a warning

to others who may be placed in a like situation, to behave more coolly than I did. Had I taken my rifle at first, I might have shot him as he lay upon the rock below; or, at all events, I could not have failed to have done so by reserving my double-barrelled gun until he passed me. Izards, when shot at, do not scamper off like other animals, but when they have proceeded a few hundred yards, stop, and look back upon those who have frightened them; thus it was with this fine old chamois, and he was almost within rifle-shot when he turned to gaze at us. I certainly could not distinguish the expression of his countenance, but I dare say it was that of scorn and derision.

Retracing our steps, we ascended the mountain, and, skirting along its side, entered one of the lateral valleys which branch off from that of Sousoûel in the direction of Cauteretz. I now began to appreciate the merits of izard hunting, as pursued by the mountaineers, and to feel no wonder at their enthusiastic attachment to the sport. The side of the mountain, although very steep, was yet broken into a succession of small gorges, or water-courses, whose hollows (the

favourite haunts of the izards) we had to examine most attentively, peering cautiously over the heights, ere we dared to descend into any of them. In this manner, many a mile, which, but for the constant excitement we were in, would otherwise have been felt fatiguing, was passed over, and we had not hitherto been able to get within shot of the watchful and suspicious little animals which we were in pursuit of, and whose heads we could frequently perceive disappearing over the crest of one ridge, as we mounted another.

It was now wearing late in the day, and I had almost begun to despair of retrieving the bad fortune of the morning, when Pierre descried an izard at rest among the rocks, a considerable distance in advance of us. Down we were on our faces in a moment; upon a further examination, it was discovered that there was a herd, and that the izard which had been first observed, was the sentinel on guard for the troop. To our sorrow, he had chosen a most admirable position for the purpose, for he had stationed himself upon a projecting ledge of rock, from which he could gaze above, below, and around him, far

beyond gun-shot. We were now nearly at the head of the valley, and more than half-way up the mountain-side. The herd were in front of us, but we could not advance a step without putting them to flight, neither could we approach nearer to where they were, either by ascending or descending the mountain; so that, to me, they appeared to be completely out of danger from us. My companions were of a different opinion, and very soon decided upon the course which was to be taken.

The spot upon which we lay overlooked a pass, by which the izards ascended the mountains from their feeding-ground in the plains below; and here it was determined that I should remain, while the two hunters endeavoured to drive the herd along it. Pierre, making a circuit of several miles round the shoulder of the mountain which we had already passed, was then to cross by its summit to the upper end of the valley, and, descending by a deep ravine, place the herd between us; while Fonda, retrograding until he could reach the plain unobserved, was afterwards to approach to them as nearly as he could: so that, when Pierre should start them, he might

be enabled to intercept them, should they attempt to cross the valley.

After they had left me, a slight haze which hung in the ravine cleared away, and I could distinctly see the herd, in groups of three or four together, feeding, or amusing themselves in the neighbourhood of their guard, in perfect security, confiding in his giving them timely notice of any danger which threatened them. In a short time, I could descry Fonda far below me, making towards the herd, sometimes by crouching on his hands and knees, sometimes by walking, as the inequalities of the surface permitted him, until he at length got near enough to them to effect his purpose.

It was three o'clock when we discovered this herd, and at half-past five Pierre had not as yet made his appearance. During this period I had been lying upon a patch of heath, well moistened by the melting of a snow-wreath which half encircled it; and, as may be supposed, was not only beginning to feel rather cold, but slight symptoms of a shivering fit were coming on, which would very soon have so unsteadied my hand, that I could not have taken an aim with

any certainty; but a pull at my brandy-flask gave me temporary relief; and before its good effects had worn off, I could see Pierre a long way a-head of the troop. Down he came slowly and cautiously towards them. Then it was that I became afraid they should discover him too soon, and take to the mountains by a nearer path than that by which we hoped to make them pass; but a cat cannot hunt her prey with more dexterity than the hunters of the Pyreneés do the izards, and Pierre succeeded in this instance. When he thought that he had got near enough to the troop to effect his object, he uttered the shrill cry peculiar only to the mountaineers, and rushed forwards to where they were. As had been contemplated, the izards, upon hearing the noise made by Pierre above them, made off for the plain below. There, however, they could not go, for Fonda lay directly in their path, and he, anxious to drive them back, did not wait until the herd came so near him as to render it possible that they might pass by him when he showed himself, started from his hiding-place and fired. The izards, confounded, halted for a moment, undecided where to go. It was still in

their power to make for the mountains, by a path too distant for me to harm them, and to my vexation, they started for it. But Pierre was too knowing for them; he had, from the first, been aware of this chance, and the instant that he had roused the troop, he made direct for this path, in the hope of cutting off their retreat by it. But they were too fleet for him, and before he could reach it, they were "going the pace" along it. He had still another "string to his bow;"—another shout, and the discharge of his gun staggered them in their flight, and decided the day in our favour. They started off again, but the herd did not keep together; two of them took the path towards me, while the remainder held on their original course, and passing Pierre, were out of danger. Onwards the two came, bounding from crag to crag, and I had but time to decide upon the spot where I should fire at them, ere they had reached it. A low short whistle from me stopped them in their flight, my rifle ball sped true, the foremost rolled down the steep, and its companion went off to join the troop upon the mountains.

On our return to the spot where we had pro-

posed to pass the night, an incident occurred which sufficiently indicates the presence of mind evinced by the mountaineers, when placed in hazardous situations. The old chasseur was passing along a very steep face of rock, so steep that he had been obliged to exchange his leathern shoes for his spartillas, when an immense piece of rock, detached from the heights above, came bounding down the mountain side, directly towards him. I, who was higher up the mountain, and a considerable distance behind him, afraid that he might not observe the rock until it might be too late to get out of its way, shouted to give him warning, but I was too far off, and the falling mass was already within a hundred paces of him. Fortunately he could hear it bounding from the rocks in its descent, so that, aware what he had to expect, he prepared himself for the event. He remained stationary, gazing in the direction that the stone was descending, and where I thought that it would have crushed him, so very near had it approached to him, with the assistance of the long staff which he carried he sprang to one side, and the rock passed over the spot upon which he had stood.

In the early season, when the snows are melting, or after heavy rains, these falling rocks constitute one of the most serious dangers to which the hunters are exposed.

The herds of izards were now beginning to come down the mountains to feed; and, on our way to Sousouêl, we saw several very large herds. In crossing over a little knoll, we came in sight of a sheep-fold of the preceding year, in and around which the largest herd we had seen, induced, by the luxuriance of the herbage, had quartered themselves. They soon saw us, for we could not approach them undiscovered, and as they scampered up the hill, we counted sixty-two, old and young together.

Upon our arrival at the bottom of the valley, we found that our messenger for food had not returned, but that a shepherd's family, whose flock were coming over the mountains on the following day, had already constructed a covering of a few boards, under which to pass the night, and had lighted a huge pile of wood. We were not long in erecting a similar shed, for the boards and planks which had been in use the preceding summer, lay scattered around; and having lit

another fire, we wanted nothing but the return of our caterer to feel perfectly satisfied with our situation.

The pastures of the little valley of Sousouêl are exceedingly rich; and during the period when the flocks and herds, and the many families who are engaged in making the cheese for which the valley of d'Ossan is famous, are assembled in it, it is then teeming with life; and the neighbouring woods, and the mountains, which rise from four to six thousand feet above the beautiful green sward of its surface, resound with the merry choruses and the shrill calls of the peasantry.

It was after ten o'clock, and we had begun to prepare our couch of the soft twigs of the box plant, and had made up our minds to go to bed supperless, despairing of the arrival of our messenger, when the wild mountain cry, which rose above the noise of the rushing stream, came most welcome to our ears. Pierre returned the cry, and, in a short time, guided by the sound, and the blaze of the fires, the absent hunter, and his well stored basket, made their appearance.

During the evening, Fonda related many of his adventures, and hair-breadth 'scapes in the

mountains; but as these anecdotes properly belong to a chapter of a third volume, which may or may not, according to circumstances, find its way into the hands of the *devils*, and through them into those of the public, I shall conclude this chapter with the death-bed scene of this fine old hunter's father.

Like Fonda himself, he had been the unflinching and determined enemy of the beasts of the forests; and, for more than half a century, had been the most successful hunter of the district; and of bears alone, then far more numerous than they are now, he had killed no fewer than ninety-nine:* When upon his death-bed, and after he had received absolution of his sins, he observed to the priest, that he had still one heavy cause of uneasiness and regret upon his mind. "What can that be?" said the curé, "you have conducted yourself honourably in your transactions with your fellow men, and you die in the true

* The high rewards given by the communes, and the Prefet of the department, to the destroyer of a bear, and the great price for which the skin of the animal sells, have been the cause why so few are now to be met within the Pyrenees.

faith, and pardoned for your sins, which have not been very heinous." "What you say is very true," answered the dying man, "but would that I had killed my hundredth bear!"

CHAPTER XXII.

Expedition to Eaux Chaudes in Winter—Pass of La Hourat—Its Dangerous Character—Hotels of the Pyrenees in Winter—Scenery in the Valley of the Eaux Chaudes—Entrance to the Forest of Gabas—Village of Gabas—Mode of Churning Butter—French Soldier—General Alava—Feelings of French Soldiery towards the Russians—Anecdote of a Bear Hunter—Forests of the Pyrenees—Magnificent Silver Firs—Unskilfulness of the Woodmen—Effects of the High Price of Iron in France—Troop of Spaniards—Le cas de Brusette—Blind Spaniard—Cascade—The Frontier—Village of Sallient—Posada—Village Doctor—Family Scene—Political Dispute—Dance—Return to Bearn.

THE routes to the watering places of the Eaux Bonnes and the Eaux Chaudes are remarkably fine, and in their vicinity is scenery which for savage grandeur is almost equal to any in the Pyrenees. That around the Eaux Chaudes is of the most imposing character, and thither I shall now conduct the reader; not when its lodging-houses

are filled with invalids, its wild paths crowded with convalescents, and the scorching rays of the summer sun beating overhead; but in the depth of winter, when the natives retreating to the lower and warmer situations, the village is almost deserted, and the falling avalanches alone disturb the stillness of the valley.

Few strangers think of penetrating into the mountains during winter, although they are then not less interesting than at other seasons of the year; perhaps even more so, for the snow and ice which render the low country altogether monotonous only adds to the character of the rugged and perpendicular sides of the mountains.

The apparent continuance of clear frosty weather, towards the end of December, was not to be resisted, and accordingly, accompanied by my friend and guide, Pierre, I set off for the mountains. When we arrived at Laruns, we found the snow very deep, and as it was late in the day, our acquaintances in the village strongly recommended us to rest there for the night, and not to proceed to the Eaux Chaudes as we intended. We were reminded of the probability of our encountering the Spanish Contrabandiers,

some of whom are certainly not over particular as to their mode of living; and the likelihood that many parts of the road would be blocked up with the fallen snow. But it was bright moonlight, and we were not to be dissuaded from proceeding.

The ascent to the magnificent Pass of La Hourat, the only entrance to the secluded valley of the Eaux Chaudes, was both tedious and fatiguing, from the quantity of snow through which we had to wade. The path which originally led to this watering place must have been scarcely better than an izard track, before the Princess Catherine, sister of Henry IV., opened up the present passage.*

* There is a small chapel, containing an image of the Virgin and Child, at the southern side of the pass, with an inscription commemorating the kindness of the Princess Catherine; and another, urging all those who enter the valley, to offer up a prayer to the Virgin, and prescribing the form of prayer to be used on the occasion. The following is a copy: "Chers voyageurs, nous voici entre les rochers fort escarpés, et l'affreux abîme du ruisseau. Par ainsi ayons recours à la sainte Vierge. Qu'elle intervienne pour nous, que nous soyons garantis de tous dangers spirituels et corporels. Prière † *Pater* † *Ave.*

"Nous avons recours à votre assistance, sainte Mére de Dieu. Ne méprisez pas les prières que nous faisons dans nos besoins, mais

The narrow road has been cut, I might almost say *tunneled,* through the elbow of the mountain which encloses the valley, and carved along its almost perpendicular side for a great way, being, even now, little better than a shelf in the rock. The entrance to the Hourat from the southern side, was, as had been predicted to us, entirely blocked up with snow, forming a rampart many feet high in front of us. But drifted snow is, in frosty weather, in general so compact, that it may either be walked, or crawled over, and accordingly over the wreath we climbed upon our hands and knees. The road may, at this particular spot, be from twelve to fifteen feet in breadth, but the snow had obliterated all traces of it, filling it up, and forming a slope from the rock rising above it, to its further side, where the precipice dropped perpendicularly for several hundred feet down to the Gave below, whose waters thundered as they rushed through the narrow gorge, which in the lapse of ages, they had worn in the mountain-

délivrez nous en tous temps de tous périls et dangers. O sainte Vierge, remplie de gloire et de bénediction! Nous, eglise de Laruns, ou prie pour. F. S. Charlans."

side which obstructed their edges. Situated as the pass of the Hourat is, at the entrance to a long and narrow valley, into which several others open, there is almost always a severe blast of wind sweeping through the defile. I have frequently remained in it for hours in the saltry days of summer, enjoying the breeze, when there was not a breath of air stirring any where else. But most fortunately upon this occasion it was not of sufficient force to hurl us into the black abyss, as we wound our way slowly and cautiously, and as near to the rock as possible, uttering not a word, nor casting our eyes upon another spot than that where each hand, as it was clutched down, would, had it been possible, have willingly grasped a more secure tenure than that which the incrusted surface of a snow-wreath afforded.

The fearful slope was, however, passed in safety, and an hour's walking afterwards brought us to the Eaux Chaudes, where (as one of the hotel keepers resides in the village during the winter) I was soon seated at a comfortable fire, with a tolerable supper before me, and the prospect of a comfortable resting place for the night;

although, I must confess, that the hotels in the Pyreneés are not well adapted for winter quarters; considering that the best quality which they can possess is to be as cool and airy as possible. This in the summer heats is pleasant enough; but in winter, when one feels the curtains of his bed (if curtains there be) flapping in his face, and as a consequence, twitches of rheumatism in the morning; or when stepping out of bed, he finds his unprotected limbs refreshed by the snowy blasts direct from the mountains which, within a few hundred yards on either side, frown over him, he is apt to think that there must have been some negligence in their construction.

The fine weather continuing next morning, we resolved to cross the mountains into Spain, and sleeping at the Spanish village of Sallient, return the ensuing day. We left Eaux Chaudes de bonneheur, intending to breakfast at Gabas, the last village upon the French side of the mountains, and situated at the base of the Pic du Midi of Pau, the most remarkable mountain in the district. In the immediate vicinity of the watering-place the mountains are so very precipitous, and the sun, when it does shine forth in the winter, so

powerful, that there is never a great deal of snow to be seen upon them, even when it is lying many feet deep in the valley; so that, although we miss the flocks and herds upon the steeps, still this valley has not the desolate appearance which others of the Pyrenées present in winter; and from the circumstance of its being one of the most frequented of the passes into Spain, there is always a considerable number of individuals in the traffic between the two countries, travelling through it.

There are many splendid amphitheatric views in this valley; indeed from the Hourat to the Cas de Broussète it is a succession of almost unequalled scenery. One of the finest of these views, is that which is beheld from the entrance to the forest of Gabas. There the road, but a few feet in breadth, sweeping round an elbow of the Som de Seube, skirts along its southern side; the river far beneath it is to be seen tumbling and tossing among the huge masses of fallen rock which impede its course, and laving the base of the Lacasol, which rises many thousand feet, clothed to a great height with the beech and silver fir, its bald and fantastically shaped crest

conspicuous among the surrounding summits. In front is the Pic du Midi, its mighty fork becoming still more imposing as it is approached, with its base covered with wood, stretching across the head of the valley, and leaving scarcely width sufficient for the river to pass between them, seems almost to touch the neighbouring mountain which completes the circle. The mountains in this district have a peculiarity which adds greatly to their beauty and interest. They are almost all detached from each other, forming distinct and separate mountains, a dozen of whose grey heads towering to the sky, may be observed from many points. The valleys which lie between them, are frequently little more than channels for the torrents; and their sides are generally, if not too precipitous, wooded; and even when so abrupt as not to admit of trees growing upon them, still the boxwood, plants of which are often of great size, finds a resting place on their steeps, and clothes their nakedness.

The village of Gabas consists of a few cottages, principally occupied by the soldiers of the Douaniers, who are stationed here to prevent the Spaniards or natives smuggling tobacco, and

other contraband articles over the frontier; but who nevertheless, contrive to elude their vigilance; for it is quite impossible to guard the paths over the mountains, many of which are perfectly unknown to the officers. Considerable quantities of Spanish wool is imported into France through this valley; and in return, the Spaniards take the shawls, handkerchiefs, and wines of Bearne.

Upon entering the little auberge where we were to breakfast, I found the owner, one of the finest looking men I ever beheld, engaged in making butter. The apparatus for churning was very simple in its character. The cream was put into a bag made of a small untanned lamb's skin, which had the wool taken off, and the aperture being tied up, the bag was shaken backwards and forwards until it was churned. The milk was then drained off, and perhaps half a pound or more of most excellent butter was rolled out of the skin. I breakfasted in company with an old soldier, and one of the most noted chasseurs of the district. The French soldiers are in general very jealous of the English, and are very seldom inclined to acknowledge that their oppo-

nents in arms on any one occasion ever gained a victory over them, which could not by them be most satisfactorily accounted for. I have met some French officers and soldiers who had wisdom enough to overcome this foolish prejudice, and candidly to review the events of the late war; but such individuals are not yet numerous (although fast increasing in number, as a good understanding between the two nations is advancing), and the Englishman when abroad must not be surprised to find even the victory of Waterloo a matter of controversy. I recollect of a discussion taking place betwixt several of the French and English residents at Tours, as to whether victory would have declared in favour of Wellington at Waterloo, had the Prussians not made their appearance. It so happened that General Alava arrived in Tours while this discussion was at its height, and as he had been present at Waterloo, *en amateur*, and both parties considered him an impartial arbiter in the case, the disputed point was referred to him; when he gave it as his opinion, that even supposing that the Prussians had not come up before evening, the victory would have been declared for Wellington.

The old veteran whom I met at Gabas, bore willing testimony to the bravery of the British soldiers; and the encomiums which he bestowed upon the Duke of Wellington and the English army were very gratifying. "Ah!" said he, "the British and French have been brave enemies in time of war, and they ought now to be good friends in time of peace." He deprecated (as the French army universally do) the cruelty of leaving the Poles to the heartless mercy of their oppressors; and expressed his willingness, old as he was, to serve in a campaign against the Russians. This feeling towards Russia is very prevalent among the French soldiery, and I am very sure that they will gladly unite in any cause which has for its object the curbing of Northern ambition. The "Powers that be" in France, are well aware of this, and this knowledge is quite sufficient to restrain them from attempting to form too intimate an alliance with the Autocrat, however anxious they *might be* to do so.

The chasseur became my most particular friend; we had had many a long walk together over the neighbouring mountains, in pursuit of the izards or bears; and a better guide, or one who had

more "hair-breadth 'scapes" to relate than Barras, was not to be found in the Pyreneés.

A rencontre which Barras had with a bear is worth narrating. It seemed that he had discovered a cavern, in which a bear had taken up his winter quarters, and from which he immediately determined to dislodge him. Single-handed he did not dare to attempt this, and accordingly he chose one of his most hardy companions to join him in the attack. The place which the bear had chosen for his retreat was an almost inaccessible cave on the side of the Pic du Midi, and among its darkest forests. When the two hunters arrived at the entrance of the cave, they consulted as to the best mode of rousing the animal, and getting him to leave it. Barras proposed that he should enter the cave, and wake him, while his companion stood guard without. This extraordinary mode of disturbing the bear's slumbers was adopted, and the sentry having sworn by the blessed Virgin to stand by his friend, the other prepared to enter the cave. For a considerable distance the cavity was large enough to permit of the daring hunter walking upright, but decreasing in height, he had to

grope his way upon all fours. While proceeding in this manner, the bear, roused by the slight noise which the hunters had made at the entrance of his chamber, was heard approaching. To turn and run away was hopeless; the bear was too near to permit of this being attempted, so that to throw himself on his face and, take the chance of the animal's passing over him, was the only chance of escape. Barras did so, and the bear walked over him without even saluting him with a growl. His companion at the mouth of the cave did not get off so easily, for expecting that he would certainly have some warning of the approach of the animal, he was not altogether prepared for the encounter when he appeared, and ere he had time to lift his gun to his shoulder, he was folded in the deadly embrace of the giant brute. Within a few yards of the cave, the precipice was several hundred feet in depth, and in the struggle both bear and man rolled over it together. Barras, eager to aid his friend, followed the bear after it had passed over him, but reached the mouth of the cave just as the bear and his comrade were disappearing over the edge of the precipice. Horror-struck at the dreadful

fate of his friend, and without the slightest hope of saving him, Barras rushed forward to descend the mountain-side, and rescue, if possible, his mangled body; when the first glance into the gorge below, revealed to him his friend dangling by his clothes among the branches of a thick shrub, which, growing out of a fissure in the precipice, had caught him in his fall, while the bear, less fortunate, had descended to the bottom. To release his friend from his precarious situation was no easy matter; but by the aid of the long sashes which the mountaineers almost always wear, he at last effected it, and drew him to the platform from which he had been so rudely hurled. The bear had lacerated him severely, but he was no sooner on his legs, than, expressing his confidence that the bear must have been killed by the fall, he proposed descending to the foot of the precipice to ascertain the result. This with much difficulty they effected, and to their great satisfaction, as well as profit, found among the rocks below the object of their search, in the last agonies of death. Sure of their prize, they returned to the Eaux Chaudes, the wounded man greatly exhausted by loss of blood; and Barras

returning next morning to the field of battle, accompanied by a band of villagers, triumphantly carried off the spoil. The occasion upon which Barras related this adventure to me was a very appropriate one; we were then crouching together under a fallen pine of great size, watching a bear pass. I asked him how he relished the bear walking over him in the cave; he said he knew that his life depended on his remaining perfectly quiet; and he drew his large bony hand down my back, by way of indicating the feeling which the tread of the animal gave him.

Having breakfasted, and shaken hands with my friend Barras and the old soldier, Pierre and I proceeded on our journey across the mountains. Some of the Douaniers who had been out on duty by daybreak, informed us that the snow had drifted considerably during the night; and that in several places the narrow path which leads along the side of the Pic de Perilou to the Cas du Broussète was completely blocked up, and rendered impassable by the masses of snow which had fallen upon it from the rocks above; but after the affair of the preceding night, we thought little of their cautionary remarks.

A short distance from the auberge, we crossed the wooden bridge over the torrent which descends from the Pic du Midi,* and along whose brink there is also a path into Spain by the eastern side of that mountain, and one of the greatest beauty in the Pyreneés. That by which we travelled is upon the western side of the Pic. Forests of the most magnificent silver firs and beeches cling to the steep sides of the Perilou and the other mountains which we passed ere reaching the valley of Broussète, some of the trees (the silver firs) being of prodigious circumference and height. Many of these trees are cut down for the French navy, and considering the fine quality of the timber, and its size, it seems very extraordinary that the government do not evince a far greater degree of interest regarding the forests which produce them. There are officers of various grades from *Gardes Forestiers* to *Inspecteurs Generals* paid to take charge of the forests belonging to government, but one and all of them seem to know very little of the duties of their

* This beautiful and remarkable mountain is sometimes called the Pic du Midi of Pau, sometimes the Pic du Midi d'Ossau.

situations; and consequently, the greatest havoc and destruction is committed upon the woods, not only by the short-sighted and unthinking villagers, but by the workmen employed by government to cut them down. I have seen trees nearly twenty feet in circumference taken down by the hatchet, and so hacked and split in the operation as to be frequently left to rot where they are felled. Upon such occasions I have often wished that I could have shown the inexperienced natives and ignorant officials how neatly a couple of Scottish foresters with their "cross cut saws" would have taken down the trees. But the unskilfulness of the peasantry is not to be wondered at, neither is the simple nature of their tools a matter of astonishment. The selfish policy of the government is the cause of both. The price of iron is maintained so exorbitantly high, that none but the wealthier classes (and they but seldom) are in the practice of using it for any purpose where wood can be substituted. In the south of France a good useful spade is never seen, an iron rake very seldom; and their saws and other carpenter's tools are of a most inferior quality; indeed, in all their implements for agriculture and other

purposes, the French are (as I once heard a liberal native of that country observe) a couple of hundred years behind us.*

Upon entering the valley of Broussète, in which we found a good quantity of snow, Pierre imagined that he descried a herd of izards at the upper end, and I immediately prepared my rifle. We watched their motions very anxiously, and almost buried ourselves in the snow to prevent them seeing us. On they came towards us, and just as I was congratulating myself upon my apparent good fortune, the herd of izards was transformed into a band of five and twenty or thirty Spaniards. From their marching in file among the inequalities of the surface, their *sombreras* had only been perceptible above the snow, so that the deception was very complete, and our astonishment at beholding the change, not little. But they

* The French people are becoming every day more and more awakened to the injurious character of the policy of their government upon the subject of the iron trade; and ere long will demand a repeal of the high duties on foreign iron. Until they attain this object, cheap iron cannot be procured in France; railroads can never be formed to advantage, even in the most populous districts; nor can the internal prosperity of the kingdom be advanced.

looked so exceedingly picturesque, almost each of them being clad in a different style of costume, and the whole of them such fine looking fellows, that, disappointed as I was, I did not *very* much regret their not being izards. They were on their way to Pau to purchase the manufactures of Bearne. Nearer the head of the valley, we met, returning from Spain, a troop of French peasants, accompanying a string of mules and horses loaded with sacks of wool. After passing the latter party, we found the track through the snow well beaten, and in many places opened up by cutting. Such troops in winter are always provided with axes and shovels, to clear away the ice and snow which would otherwise obstruct their transit.

At the head of the valley is Le Cas de Broussète, the last habitation upon the French side of the frontier. The distance between the Spanish village of Sallient and Gabas being, even in summer, too far for one day's journey by those engaged in the commerce of the two countries, the French government have built the Cas de Broussète so as to divide the distance, and in winter obviate the danger of attempting such a passage across the mountains. The house is

large and spacious, capable of accommodating several troops of merchants and their baggage; a hundred and fifty of whom are not unfrequently storm-staid in it for days or weeks together. Secluded among precipitous mountains covered with snow, or sheeted with ice, a more wild and lonely abode can scarce be conceived; or one whose solitude—but for the circumstance of there being a path-way practicable for horses leading by it over the frontier—runs less risk of being disturbed. Three brothers have the care of this *Hospice*, who have constantly resided in it for many years, and have not during all that period ever quitted the valley, except when obliged to go to Gabas for provisions. Although they see little of the world, they see a great deal of *life*, and are frequently witnesses of scenes of boisterous mirth, or ferocious quarreling among the legal traffickers, the contrabandiers, and travellers who take refuge from the tempests in the Cas de Brousséte.

The upper part of the valley is enclosed by ridges from the mountains which border it, up whose steeps the ascent is so rugged and dangerous that it seemed perfectly wonderful that the mules and horses could descend them loaded

in the manner in which I have seen them. Half way up the ascent, we met an aged Spaniard carrying a heavy load of sheep skins upon his head. The poor fellow, very insufficiently protected from the cold by his tattered clothes, was blind of an eye, and told us that he had sustained many severe bruises, from the falls which he had had among the crags. A draught from our flask was most thankfully accepted, and he proceeded on his toilsome march muttering blessings on us.

There is here in summer a very fine cascade. The river then rolls from a precipice of great height into the valley; but in winter it is calm and still, and when I passed it, a long perpendicular sheet of ice alone marked its course. After surmounting this ascent—the most difficult and fatiguing on the road—we entered another valley much smaller and less picturesque than the preceding, for in it there was not a vestige of wood, and the mountains which enclose it are inferior in height and character.

An hours' walk brought us to the frontier. The boundary is, as usual, marked by the water courses; where the water runs towards Spain, that is Spanish ground; where towards France,

it is French. Independent of this circumstance, nature seems to have otherwise pointed this place out as the limits of the two countries. Upon the immediate frontier, the aspect of the kingdoms is altogether different. In the French territory appear the blue rocky mountains, hanging with wood, and interspersed with fine pastures even among their highest altitudes. In the Spanish, the sudden alteration of the strata renders the valley and surrounding mountains most sterile and desolate; their rocks look as if they had been on fire, and their ashes scattered around. A few spots of herbage in this waste, only make its barrenness more marked. In summer, however, the dreary appearance of this valley must be somewhat enlivened by the beautiful flowers of the rhododendron, plants of which I observed peeping from beneath each rock where a particle of soil could be obtained.

The village of Sallient is about five hours' walk from the frontier, so that by the time we reached it, it was almost dark. It is situated upon an eminence at the junction of several valleys, and from the circumstance of the backs of the houses being placed towards the mountains, and their

regularity in height,* and want of windows, the village, or rather town, for it is of considerable extent, has much the appearance of a fortification, and could easily be rendered such in time of war.

In the preceding summer, Pierre had accompanied the lady of the Belgian Ambassador across the mountains to the baths of Pentacousse by this path, upon which occasion they had slept at Sallient; he was, therefore, acquainted with the localities of the place; so that after threading our way for some time through a labyrinth of dirty lanes, we found the posada where we were to spend the night. A small wicket in a door which filled a large archway admitted us into the lower part of the building, which, as usual, was apportioned to the bestial portion of the establishment, the winter's fuel, casks of wine or *aqua ardente*, and other stores. Upon hallooing for some of the inmates to descend, and conduct us through the windings of the place, a little urchin came down a trap-stair at the further end, bear-

* In the Spanish villages the houses are almost universally two stories in height.

ing in his hand a piece of blazing pine. By the light of this brand we were enabled to steer clear of the heels of the mules, unsaluted even by a stray kick, which few strangers who pass through the under hall of a Spanish posada are not threatened with, and reached the principal room of the house, which served the joint purposes of kitchen and salle-a-manger. Here we found crouching round a wretchedly bad fire, the senora of the house, her eldest daughter, a girl of nineteen, and half a score of boys and girls under that age. It is very seldom that any strangers, above the rank of those engaged in the traffic across the frontiers are seen in this village, so that our arrival created considerable bustle among the members of the family. A fresh supply of fuel was brought from the stores below and heaped upon the hearth, a few additional pieces of lighted pine stuck in the sides of the chimney, illuminated the apartment, and the hostess prepared our supper.

Meanwhile Pierre and I having pulled off our wet clothes, seated ourselves on the bench, which, like those of our lowland cottages some years ago, almost encircled the fire place. There we had

not long established ourselves, ere the landlord (who was also the Maire of the village), accompanied by several other individuals, entered the room, muffled up to the throat in their dark mantles. The costume of the Arragonese peasantry in winter is by no means pleasing. They are then seldom without their dark cloaks, underneath which they wear jackets and small clothes of the same sombre hue, unornamented, as is generally the case even among the poorest of the peasantry of other districts. Beneath their huge sombreras, which they seldom lay aside but when they sleep, they wear a coloured Bearnais handkerchief twisted round their heads. Curiously wrought blue or white worsted stockings and sandals complete the dress of the men. That of the women is generally of blue woollen cloth made tight to the figure, and beneath the waist exceedingly full. Their head dress is either composed of a white or coloured cotton handkerchief, but never so tastefully arranged as those of their Bearnais neighbours.

The host, after the usual salutations, immediately inquired if I knew how the war was going on. I pleaded total ignorance on the subject,

aware that the less I talked upon the subject on the Spanish side of the frontier, to individuals whose politics I had had no means of ascertaining, the less chance there was of my creating suspicions as to my motives for entering the country. Apparently satisfied that I knew little of the actual state of the war, he left me to join his companions, who in the further end of the apartment were loudly debating upon a matter seemingly of much interest to them, and relating to which one of them held in his hand a long roll of papers. Somewhat curious to ascertain the cause of their discussion, I made Pierre ask the senora if she was acquainted with the reason of it, when she told us that it was "settling night" with the doctor of the village, and that the papers contained a list of the inhabitants who were indebted to him. The mode of paying the Esculapius of the place, was by each family compounding for his attendance for a certain yearly sum. Ten francs for each house would, in so large a village as Sallient yield a very tolerable income to the doctor, and ought scarcely to have been considered an exorbitant sum by the householders to pay for having their bodily health

taken care of. But they grumbled sadly at the tax, especially those who had not required any attendance; while those who had been ill complained of the additional expense of the medicines. The landlord, in particular, was very wroth at being obliged to pay as much as eight francs for the potions which his family had swallowed during the preceding year, and asked me if I did not consider the sum of eighteen francs a year, an immense sum to pay the doctor for his advice and medicines. Fifteen shillings a year might be a large sum to the inhabitants of a poor Spanish village, but there seemed to be no mode of getting rid of the tax, grumble as they might, at its infliction, as they presently, although very reluctantly, marched off to pay it, and left us to pick our supper from a few *spare* ribs of mutton, which the senora had grilled for us among the embers of the fire.

Spanish women are proverbial for the beauty of their eyes, and those of this family were certainly by no means calculated to create dissent from the general impression, and none to which the term "speaking eyes" could more truly be applied. In those of the mother (a woman of

forty years of age) intrigue was written in most legible characters, while in those of the daughter, it seemed almost as intelligible. In the course of the evening, I was exceedingly amused by the care which the ladies took to prevent the host witnessing the slightest familiarity between them and any of the men who came into the posada. The daughter, and more frequently the mother, would be seated beside some handsome mule-driver or smuggler, whose arm (seeing that there was no back to the benches on which they sat) was very naturally entwined round their waists. Mine host did not, however, seem to relish this substitute for a chair-back. and consequently the slightest suspicion of his entrance sufficed to throw the fireside circle into commotion; away flew the females to wash the plates and dishes, and the men seemed engaged in fastening their spartillas. On one occasion the host entered so abruptly that, had it not been for the instantaneous presence of mind of the daughter, I should have been witness to a scene of a most unpleasant character. The mother, supported in the manner I have mentioned, had not time to start from her seat, but the moment her husband entered, his

daughter (who happened to be then crossing the apartment) dropped a plate as if accidentally. His attention was drawn to it, and the situation of his partner was unobserved. Picking up a fragment of the plate, and holding it as if he intended throwing it at the girl, he cursed her for her carelessness. She, however, saved her mother's life by the act, for I am confident that had there been no plate broken on the occasion, that the knife would have been called into requisition, and one or both of the delinquents been killed, for what, in any of our country inns, the landlord would have beheld with comparative indifference. No class of Spaniards are more *ready* with their knives than the Arragon, and none who can use it more effectually. Their knife is rather longer than that of the peasantry of other districts, and though a clasp knife, is a weapon of the most deadly nature. The mode in which they use it is by grasping the case, with their thumb resting upon the under part of the inside of the blade, which is blunt, and then drawing down their arm to its full length, they strike upwards invariably, driving the blade into their antagonist's body until their thumb prevents its

further entrance. Such a wound is almost always a fatal one, and the traveller in Spain must be cautious how he renders himself liable to such attacks from his intimacy with pretty faces and intriguing eyes.

In the course of the evening, many of the villagers had assembled in an adjoining room, to sip their wine, and talk over the politics of the day. There were among them supporters of both the great parties contending for the sovereignty of the country; each of them anxious for the success of the cause he had espoused. As usual in such discussions, the longer that the argument lasted, the more warm became the debate, until the voices of the speakers were so elevated, that the senora, accustomed as she no doubt was to such scenes, was alarmed for the consequences. There seemed every probability of the *argumentum ad hominem* being put in requisition by the contending factions, when one of the party, more wise than the rest, commenced in a fine and powerful voice one of their national songs. The effect was electrical, the disputation instantly ceased, and one and all of them joined in the chorus. After several songs had been

sung, and the harmony of the party completely restored, the landlord came and asked me to join them. I accepted the invitation, and was most cordially welcomed. In honour of the stranger a dance was proposed, and the wives and daughters of the individuals present were soon assembled together. Here, as in Andorre, and in other Spanish villages, the instruments were the guitar and triangle. Both men and women danced uncommonly well, and displayed as much spirit as I ever beheld in a Highland reel; several hours' continued dancing scarcely seemed to abate their ardour. The younger girls danced beautifully, and it was wonderful the exertion which they endured; for the gentlemen being far more numerous than the ladies, each man, when he thought his friend had exhibited long enough, elbowing him out, took his place, and thus their partners had no respite.

At last I "stole away" to my old corner at the kitchen fire, and soon after the party broke up. The chamber in which I was to sleep contained a couple of beds, which Pierre told me, upon the last occasion that he visited the posada, were occupied by the Belgian Ambassadress and her

maid, while he slept on the floor of the room in the honourable capacity of guard to her Excellency. The half dozen gentlemen who were of the party, were obliged to roll themselves in their cloaks, and sleep on the floor of the kitchen, a situation not at all relished by the delicate Parisians. Had it been summer, I should have much preferred dozing on a bench or table, to trusting myself between the sheets of a posada bed; but the winter's cold had destroyed certain bedfellows very common in France and Spain, and the wearied traveller, at that season of the year, could feel satisfied that his place of repose would not be converted into one of torture.

While engaged in heaping as many cloaks upon our beds as we could find, the door of our room was opened, and the young lady of the house, carrying a pine torch, entered, followed by a young Spaniard (her favourite I believe), who was very tipsy. She conducted him by a trap-stair which mounted from our room to his bed in the attic above, and after some little delay, occasioned, I presume, by her showing him the direction in which it stood, she returned bringing the light with her. In the poorer Spanish houses

there are neither candles nor lamps, and the mode of lighting the apartments is by means of pieces of blazing pine placed upon a flat piece of iron suspended from the wall; and these pines of the country being full of resin, a few slips are sufficient to light a large room.

Next morning, I found the whole of the party of the preceding night assembled in the posada, to request me to remain a day or two longer in their village. But this I could not have done, even had I been inclined, as I had forgotten to bring a passport with me; so that, having breakfasted, and taken leave of the villagers of Sallient, we returned across the mountains to Bearn.

APPENDIX.

SKETCH DESCRIPTIVE OF THE FORMATION, APPEARANCE, AND CHARACTER OF THE PYRENEES.

THE Pyreneés are that chain of mountains which divide the Spanish peninsula from France, and which extend from the *Cap de Cervere*, to the south-east of *Colliouvre*, or, rather, from the *Cap de Creus*, near *Rosas*, upon the shores of the Mediterranean, to the point of *Figuier*, near *Fontarabia*, on the Bay of Biscay.

It is almost generally supposed, that the Pyreneés are an isolated chain of mountains, from the circumstance that their extremities drop into the sea; but a glance at the maps of France or Spain will be sufficient to determine that the Pyreneés form but a part of the system of the mountains of the two countries. In short, the Pyreneés appear to be attached, on the east, to the

great chain of the Alps, by the *Montagne Noire*, and the *Cévennes*; and to the west, long before they dip into the ocean, at the point of *Figuier*, they stretch away to Cape *Ortegal*, in *Galicia;* so that their apparent termination at the point of *Figuier*, is merely that of a lateral branch, which detaches itself from the principal chain at the head of the valley of the *Bastan*. In like manner, their junction with the *Montagne Noire*, and the *Cévennes*, is effected by means of another lateral chain, which branches off to the east of the valley of the *Teta*, in the French *Cerdagne*.

Excepting in a few instances, the boundaries of the two countries are fixed by the course of the waters from the summits of the central ridge; the land to the north of the division of the streams belonging to France, and that on the south appertaining to Spain.

The French departments situated upon the frontier with Spain, are, beginning on the east, those of the *Pyreneés Orientales*, the *Arriège*, the *Haute Garonne*, the *Hautes Pyreneés*, and the *Basses Pyreneés*. The department of the *Aude*, although at some distance from the central chain, contains, nevertheless, mountains which belong to the Pyreneés; and these are the branches generally known as the mountains of the *Corbières*, a part of the connecting link between the French and Swiss mountains. The ancient provinces of France comprised in these departments, are the *Vallspir*,

Roussillon, the *Conflens*, the *Cerdagne*, the *Capsir*, the *Donnezan*, the *Pays de Sault*, a part of *Languedoc*, the county of *Foix*, the *Couzerans*, *Comminges*, the *Quatre valleés*, *Bigorre*, *Béarn*, the *Pays de Soule*, *Basse Navarre*, and the *Pays de Labourd*.

The Spanish provinces adjoining the Pyreneés are, *Catalonia*, *Arragon*, *Haute Navarre*, and *Biscay*.

The length of the Pyreneés, from east to west, is about two hundred miles; and their breadth very varied. It is greater in the centre than towards the extremities of the chain, but may throughout be averaged at sixty miles.

The Pyreneés are seen from a great distance, from whichever side they are regarded. One of the most favourable points from which to enjoy a view of the greater part of this magnificent chain, is from the hills called *Pech David*, to the south of Toulouse. There the spectator is placed nearly in front of the centre of the range, sufficiently distant to admit of a vast horizon; and yet near enough to distinguish their most remarkable features. From the *Pech David* the Pyreneés may be seen for more than a hundred and fifty miles, from the *Canigoû*, in *Roussillon*, to the great summits at the head of the valley *d' Ossau*, in the *Basses Pyreneés*.

The appearance which they present is extremely imposing; they appear to form one single mountain, increasing in height towards the east, but broken into

summits of various forms and characters. But the aspect of the mountains is not always the same, depending entirely on the state of the atmosphere, the hour of the day, and the season. There are many days, however, throughout the year, when the purity of the air is sufficiently perfect to admit of all the summits being seen which are visible from Toulouse. It is in the beginning of Spring, or towards the end of Autumn, that this magnificent sight is to be most distinctly seen, and the hours most favourable for beholding it, are those immediately after sunrise, and before sunset; the sky is then more free from vapour, the outline of the mountains is better defined, and their shades more deeply marked. During the prevalence of the west and north winds, the Pyreneés are, most frequently, shrouded in mists, particularly towards their eastern extremities.

The direction of the Pyreneés is, as has been already noticed, from east-south-east to west-north-west; nevertheless, the range does not pursue a direct line, but is on the contrary composed of two parts, or two lines, which are indeed parallel in their course, but are not the continuation of each other. Thus, if we divide the chain into two parts towards the centre, we should find that the half situated upon the west was considerably further south than that upon the east; and that two lines, one drawn from the eastern, and the other from the western extremity of the range, would throughout their

course, be at least thirty miles distant from each other. The *Garonne*, the most beautiful river of the Pyreneés, has its source among the mountains at the junction of the two chains. The eastern chain is terminated in the valley of the Garonne, by the mountain called *Tenenade;* but the point at which the mountains, linking the two chains together, separate from the eastern one, is at the *Tuc** *du Mauberme;* and the *Port d'Espot* the point at which they unite with the western.

The Pyrenées have, to the south and to the north, many lateral branches, which gradually decrease in height as they recede from the central range, until they are lost in the plains more or less distant from the foot of the mountains. There are, however, some exceptions to this general disposition. A few of these lateral ranges maintain a great altitude throughout their whole length, and are terminated by mountains of considerable height; others, on the contrary, terminate ere they have left the mountains, generally at the junction of two valleys. Besides these branches, which, like buttresses for the support of the central ridge, stretch off laterally on both sides of it, there are also a considerable number of minor chains, which take a direction similar to the great one. The most remarkable of these minor chains are to

* The word *Tuc* has, in the patois of the *Couzerans*, the district in which that mountain is situated, the same signification as *Pic*.

be found in the departments of the *Arriège* and the *Basses Pyreneés.* The point at which two of these branches commence is generally marked by the increased height of the great ridge, and the source of opposite valleys by the diminution. These depressions at the heads of the valleys constitute the natural passages by means of which the peasantry are enabled to pass from one to another. In the Alps, and towards the extremities of the Pyreneés, they are called *Cols*; but, in the centre of the chain, they are known by the name of *Ports.* The first of these terms is used in the departments of the *Pyreneés Orientales,* and the *Basses Pyreneés;* * and the second in those of the *Arriège,* the *Haute Garonne,* and the *Hautes Pyreneés.*

Ramond, and other celebrated naturalists, are of opinion, that the southern slopes of the Pyreneés, are the most steep and rapid; and what I have seen of the Spanish sides of the mountains leads me to confirm their assertions. There the ascents are invariably more steep and rugged, and, consequently, more difficult and

* In *Basse Navarre,* which forms a part of this department, the *Cols* are called *Lepoa,* a word which in the Basque language, has precisely the same signification as *Col,* which signifies literally the *neck* (le cou) of the mountain.

The terms *Partillon, Cot, Hourque, Hourquette, Fourque, Fourquette, Porte, Breche,* &c., have all the same signification, and are used indiscriminately with those of *Col* and *Port.*

fatiguing. Almost the whole of the French valleys either ascend gradually to the central ridge, or by a succession of basins. On the Spanish frontier this is seldom the case; and in the vicinity of the highest mountains,—of Mont Perdu, for instance,—we find the Spanish summits decrease in altitude very suddenly, dwindling almost into insignificance at its base; while, on the French, or northern side of that great mountain, there are very many summits but little inferior in height to its own.

I have already observed that the Pyreneés, as they approach the coasts, decrease in height very rapidly. This depression of the mountains commences much sooner at one extremity than at the other, Thus, there is no considerable summit within twenty-two or twenty-three leagues of the Bay of Biscay; while the Canigoû is within less than fifteen of the Mediterranean.

The Pyreneés contain a great number of valleys. All the great valleys are transversal. They begin at a *Col* in the ridge of the central chain; and, taking their course directly to the north or south, they form nearly a right angle with it.

The valleys of the greatest length are those situated towards the centre of the range. These are, the valleys of the *Garonne*, and the *Lavedan*, the latter watered by the *Gave of Pau*, which unites with the *Adour*, a few miles above *Bayonne*: the length of the first is

about fifteen leagues; the second about thirteen. The longitudinal valleys, or those whose direction is parallel with the centre range, are in general of very small extent; most frequently mere ravines, or gorges. The most considerable of the number is that of *Massat*, or *Soulan*, and that of the *Bastan*;* in which are situated the famous baths of *Barèges*. Their length is six or seven leagues.

The valleys which terminate in the plains at the northern base of the Pyrenees are sometimes broad and open at their entrance, sometimes exceedingly confined. Among those of the first class are the valleys of the *Tech*, of the *Teta*, of the *Arriège*, of the *Sallat*, of the *Lavedan*, of *Ossau*, and many others. The valley of the *Garonne*, and those of *Aure*, of *Aspe*, of *Baigorry*, &c., are, on the other hand, extremely narrow at their entrances, as are, almost without exception, both the transversal and parallel valleys of these mountains.

There are very few of the valleys of the Pyrenees, which, throughout their course, do not present a succession of basins. These basins are formed by the mountains which border the valley receding from the banks of the river, and leaving a circular hollow, where there is so

* There are two valleys of this name in the Pyrenees, one appertaining to France, the other to Spain; but they are situated at such a distance from each other, that they are seldom, or never, confounded with each other.

slight a declivity, that the stream undulates slowly through its whole extent, assuming a character in accordance with the quietness of the scenery around it: until at the extremity of the basin, where the mountains again close in upon it, and confine it in its course, it resumes its original character, and dashes through their gorges, and over their precipices. These basins are, in general, considerably elevated above each other, and are joined together by narrow and deep ravines, rapidly inclined plains, or by a slope of rock so very perpendicular, that the river dashing over, forms a cataract from the basin above to that beneath. They are more frequent in the upper part of the valleys, and are there better defined and more remarkable in appearance than in the inferior, where they are much less perfect; although, at the same time, they seem, from the marks of destruction which they bear, to have, in other times, been as complete as those in higher situations, where hitherto, there has never been such accumulations of the waters, as to have destroyed their comparatively level surface, by working through, or destroying the precipice, or slope, over which their rivers rush in unbridled turbulence. The quantity of alluvial matter which they contain, is also conclusive evidence that these inferior basins were at one period as perfect as the others.

The hollows, or basins in the upper districts of the valleys, frequently contain lakes, whose extent is propor-

tionate to the dimensions of the basin. These lakes are very common in the Pyreneés, and are to be found in almost all of the valleys on their northern side. On the Spanish side, they are seldom to be met with; a fact that may almost be thought sufficient to establish as correct the opinion that the southern sides of the Pyreneés are far more steep and rapid than the northern.

When these lakes, which are never of great extent, are found at such heights as to be surrounded by glaciers and perpetual snows, they are generally covered with ice throughout the year. Thus the lakes of the *Port d'Oo*, and the *Portillon d'Oo* are always frozen; and the lake of *Mont Perdu*, and those of *Estom-Soubiran* in the valley of Cauteretz, are covered with ice until the end of August. The basins also, which are now-a-days merely watered by the river which flows through their centre, bear incontestable evidence of the existence of ancient lakes, of which they were the beds. Their soil so often marshy or full of peat, their rocky sides far above their surface, bearing marks of the ravages of the waters; and the manner in which the torrent breaks away from these basins by a deep and narrow gorge, are the proofs that they have in other times been lakes hemmed in upon all sides; and that they are only now drained by means of the breach which their superfluous waters have forced in the bed of rock which inclosed them.

At the junction of various valleys and gorges, there is

always one of these basins; and it is a general rule in the Pyreneés, that the extent of the basin is in proportion to the number and width of the lateral valleys, ravines, and gorges which open into it;* and that when a valley suddenly alters its direction, the elbow thus formed is invariably followed by one of them.

The largest of these basins do not exceed eight miles in length, by three or four in breadth. Such are the magnificent basin of *Argelez*, in the valley of the Lavedan, of *Bagneres*, in the valley of Luchon, and of *Bedous*, in the vallée d'Aspe. It is generally in the inferior part of a valley that we find the basins of the greatest extent, because there the greatest number of tributaries unite with them.

The mountains which skirt a valley very seldom ascend unbroken to their summits, but, in general, attain their full height by many slopes, more or less rapidly inclined. At the base of these successive slopes are little plains, and the number of these slopes and plains depend altogether upon the altitude of the mountains, and the nature of the rocks which compose them. We almost constantly find that the stratum which lies along one side of a valley, corresponds with that upon the

* It is from an observation of this nature that *M. Palassou* draws his strongest arguments against the opinion of those geologists who attribute the formation of the valleys to the currents of the ocean.

other; and that if there is a plain upon the heights on one side, there is a corresponding plain upon the other. This circumstance would seem to prove, that the soil of the valley has at some period or other, been of the same height with the plains upon each side of it, and that the waters have in the lapse of ages, worn it down.

This arrangement of the slopes is most apparent in the upper districts of the valleys, because the mountains which are situated in the lower are, comparatively speaking, so much inferior in height, that the terraces or plains which we find at greater elevations, have disappeared, and there is but one continued slope from their base to their summit.

These observations regarding the plains or table lands to be found among the Pyrenees, and the circumstance of their generally corresponding with others situated on opposite sides of the valley upon which they are found, is most decidedly characterized in the valley of *Héas*, which opens into that of the *Lavedan*, near the village of Gedre. The valley of *Héas* is found to contain two of these plains, which, at a great height above the stream which runs through it, extend from one extremity of it to the other. The plain which we observe upon the left hand, is that of the *Coumelie*, upon the mountain of the same name; and upon the opposite side, that of the *Camplong*, of the same height as the preceding one. The rock which composes the soil of the valley, and of

the mountains below these plains, is granitic; the whole of the mountains above them to their summits are, on the other hand, formed of shiste or limestone; thus evidently from this coincidence it would seem that these plains were at one period the *bottom* of the valley, until the torrents wore out the great gulf between them.*

There is little appearance of order in the formation of the valleys at those points where two or more of them unite; we there find the various strata of which the Pyreneés are composed confused together, the primary and the secondary formations united; and not unfrequently, as in the case of *Mont Perdu* and others, we

* These facts, however numerous, cannot establish the doctrine of many geologists, that all valleys have been formed by the receding of the seas, or the destructive influence of the rivers; as there exist many incontestable proofs of their having been formed by depression, or by some convulsion of nature heaving up the mountains which border them. One remarkable instance of this nature, occurs to me at this moment, It is the valley of the Devon in Clackmananshire. There we have abundant proof that a convulsion of nature has created it. We there find the strata upon both sides of the valley, not lying in a horizontal direction, as in those valleys supposed to have been formed by the waters, but dipping, like an inverted arch, through the hollow of the valley, and, rising upon both sides of it, appearing in the form of a pack of cards resting against an inclined plane—the inclined plane being the hills which inclose it. Depression or convulsion could alone have formed such a valley.

also find the once prevailing opinion of geologists, that the highest mountains of the European continent were those of primitive rock, confuted, and a mountain of secondary formation rearing its head above the primitive ones around it.

The source of many of the Pyrenean valleys is a hollow, or, as it is styled in the Pyreneés, a *Oule,** surrounded by walls of perpendicular rock, excepting towards the point where the waters collected in it have worn for themselves a passage, through which they leave it. The walls which surround these basins or *Oules,* are most frequently called *Cirques*, and sometimes, from the successive slopes and perpendicular masses of rock which surmount them, *Amphitheatres.*

The most beautiful of these *Circles* is that of *Gavarnie,* at the source of the valley of the Lavedan. That Circle is not, perhaps, the most extensive in the Pyreneés, but the walls which surround it are the highest and most perfect. In all the other great circles, the walls are more or less unequal in their height, and more or less perpendicular. The Circle of *Troumouse* at the source of the valley of Héas, is larger than that of *Gavarnie,* but the rocks which inclose it are far less remarkable in appearance. The Circle at the source of the valley of *Estaubé*

* *Oule,* or *Houle,* or *Ouil,* is a word in patois signifying a *large pot* or *kettle* (*marmite*).

is still less perfect in its formation. There are also many other of these Circles in the Pyreneés less worthy of notice than those which I have mentioned; among them are those at the source of the valleys of *Ossonne*, and *Treimbareil*, and all those which open into the valley of *Barèges;* and those in the valley of *Betmalle*, at the foot of the *Roque de Balam*, and in that of *Uret*, both of which valleys are tributaries of the valley of *Castillon*.

M. Charpentier, the latest geological writer upon the Pyreneés, makes the following observations upon the formation of their valleys. "Lorsqu' on considère la constitution physique des vallées, et les divers phénoménes qu' elles présentent, on reconnaît facilement que leur excavation ne peut pas être le résultat ni de courants de mer, ni d'affaissements ou de soulèvements des montagnes, mais celui d'une chute ou descent constante des eaux. Il est plus que vraisemblable que les Pyreneés, lorsqu' elles sortirent de la mer où elles sont nées, n' ont formé qu' une seule longue montagne en forme de dos d'âne; que les deux pentes n'etaient point unies, mais presentaient des creux, des enfoncements et d'autres inégalités; que les eaux qui remplissaient ces creux ou bassins ont épanché leur trop plein par la voie la plus convenable aux lois de la pesanteur, et du coté où elles éprouvaient la moindre résistance; et qu' enfin, en se versant des bassins supérieurs dans les bassins inferieurs, elles ont du insensiblement excaver et creuser les rochers

qui séparaient un bassin de l'autre, agrandir ces mêmes bassins, élargir et approfondir les canaux, pour m'exprimer ainsi, par lesquels elles s' écoulaient d'un réservoir à l' autre, et former de cette manière peu a peu de vastes conduits, auxquels ou a donné le nom de *vallées.*"

The truth or incorrectness of this hypothesis of Charpentier's, I shall leave more learned geologists than myself to support or refute.

The principal valleys which have their source on the northern side of the central ridge of the Pyrenees are, beginning upon the east,

The valley of the *Tech.* This valley opens upon the plains of Roussillon, near the town of *Boulou,* and its river runs into the Mediterranean a short distance from Elne.

The valley of the *Teta.* This valley also opens upon the plains of Roussillon; and its river flowing near Perpignan, falls also into the Mediterranean.

The valley of the *Aude.* The river of the *Aude* leaves the mountains in the vicinity of *Limoux,* and flowing near *Carcassonne* empties itself into the Mediterranean about six leagues from Narbonne.

The valley of the *Arriege.* This beautiful valley terminates in the plains of Languedoc, between *Foix* and *Pamiers,* and its river flows into the *Garonne,* near the village of *Portet,* a league above Toulouse.

The valley of *Vicdessos.* This valley, famous for its

iron mines and forges, is a tributary of the preceding, and joins it near the town of *Tarascon*.

The valleys of *Aulus* and *Ercé*.

The valley of *Ustou*. These three valleys join the great valley of the *Sallat*; the two first near the village of *Oust*, and the last near the little hamlet called *Lepont-de-la-Taule*.

The valley of the *Sallat*. This valley opens into the plain near *Saliex*, and its river, the *Sallat*, unites with the *Garonne* a little below *St. Martory*.

The valley of *Castillon*, or the *Castillonaise*. Its river, the *Lers*, joins the Sallat near *Saint Girons*. The upper part of this valley is generally called the valley of *Biros*.

The valley of *Ger*, or *Aspect*. The torrent of this little valley falls into the Garonne near the village of *Montespan*, a couple of leagues from *St. Gaudens*.

The valley of the *Garonne*. This valley, the longest of the Pyrenees, terminates in the plains of *Comminges*, between *Saint Bertrand*, and *Montrejeau*. From its source in the mountains of Spain to the *Pont-du-roi*, a league and a half above *St. Béat*, it is known as the valley *d'Arran*, and forms a part of the province of *Catalonia*.

The valley of *Luchon*. This valley joins that of the *Garonne*, near the village of *Cierp*.

The valley of *Larboust*. This valley opens into the preceding, in the vicinity of *Bagneres de Luchon*.

The valley of *Louron.* The river of this valley flows into that of the valley *d'Aure,* near the town of *Arreau.*

The valley of *Aure.* This valley terminates among the low hills in the neighbourhood of *Barthe-de-Nestes,* and its river joins the *Garonne* near Montrejeau. The upper portion of this valley is called the valley of the *Neste.*

The valley of the *Campan.* This beautiful and much-famed valley has not its source in the central ridge, as all the others which I have mentioned, but is formed by a ramification of the great lateral chain which separates the valley *d'Aure* from that of the *Lavedan.* It opens into the plain near *Tarbes,* and its river, the *Adour,* flows into the bay of Biscay, near *Bayonne.*

The valley of *Héas.* This small, but very interesting valley, opens into that of the *Lavedan,* at the village of *Gédre.*

The valley of the *Lavedan.* This great valley, although bearing the general name of the *Lavedan,* has nevertheless, in different districts, particular appellations. From its entrance to its source, under the walls of the Marboré, it bears the several names of the valley of *Argelès,* of *Barèges,* and of *Gavarnie,* according as the portions of it are in the vicinity of one or other of these villages. It terminates at *Lourdes,* and its river, the Gave* of Pau, joins the Adour a few leagues from *Bayonne.*

* Throughout Bèarn, and part of Bigorre, the word "gave" is a

The valley of *Cauteretz.* This valley is a tributary of that of the *Lavedan,* and unites with it near *Pierre-fittes.*

The valley of *Azun.* Another tributary of the *Lavedan,* opening into it near *Argellez.*

The valley *d'Ossau.* This valley opens into the plain of *Arudy,* and its river, the *Gave of Olèron,* unites with that of *Pau* near *Peyhorade.*

The valley *d'Aspe.* This valley—famous as that through which the armies of France, in ancient times, on many occasions, passed into Spain—terminates among the hills near *Oleron,* and its river unites with the *Gave of Oleron.*

The valley of *Baretous.* This little valley terminates among the same hills as the preceding.

The valley of *Soule.* This valley, most frequently styled the *Pays de Soule,* terminates among the little hills in the vicinity of the town of Mauléon, and its river, the *Soisson,* unites with the *Gave of Oleron,* a short distance from *Sauveterre.*

The valley of *Cize.* This valley, sometimes called the *Pays de Cize,* unites with the valley of *Baigorry.*

The valley of *Louzaide.* This valley terminates in the basin of *Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port,* formed by the

general term for all the rivers and torrents of the province; and to distinguish them, the name of the principal village or town which the river flows past, or valley through which it winds, is added.

valley of *Cize*. The upper part of this valley appertains to Spain.

The valley of *Baigorry*. This valley terminates below the watering-place of *Cambo*, and its river, the *Nive*, joins the *Adour* at Bayonne.

The valley of the *Bastan*. The greater part of this valley appertains to Spain, and the upper part of it is a portion of *Haute-Navarre*.

The valley of the *Bidassoa*. Nearly the whole of this valley is Spanish soil, forming part of the Biscayan province of Guipuzcoa.

Besides the above-mentioned valleys, there are a great number of others of inferior note, upon the northern side of the Pyreneés.

The principal valleys upon the southern or Spanish side of the Pyreneés, commencing upon the eastern extremity, are,

The valley of the *Muga*. The river of this valley flows past the town of *Figuerés*, in *Catalonia*, and into the gulf of *Rosas* in the *Mediterranean*.

The valley of the *Ter*. This valley is of much greater extent than the preceding. Its river, the *Ter*, flows past *Gironne*, and into the Mediterranean.

The valley of *Rigart*. This little valley opens into that of the *Ter*.

The valley of the *Segre*. The upper part of this valley, is the *French Cerdagne*. Its river, the *Segre*,

flows into the *Ebro*, near the fortress of *Mesquinensa*, in *Catalonia*.

The valley of *Balire*,

The valley of *Ordino*. These two valleys unite near the village of *Andorre*, and their rivers flow into the Sègre near the town of *Urgel*. These valleys, with their dependent lateral valleys and gorges, form the little republic of *Andorre*.

The valley of *Ferrara*,

The valley of *Cardous*. These two valleys unite near *Tirbia*, and their river flows into the *Noguera Paillaresa*.

The valley of *Paillas*. The river of this valley flows into the *Sègre*, near *Ballaguer*.

The valley of *Borri*. This valley is of small extent, and is watered by the *Noguera del Tort*, which flows into the *Nognera Ribagorsana*, near the village of *Torre*.

The valley of *Ribagorsana*. This valley is generally called the valley of *Senet*, and is beautiful as well as extensive. Its river joins the *Sègre* between *Ballaguer* and *Lerida*.

The valley of *Essera*. This valley is generally styled the valley of *Benasque*. Its river flows into the *Cinca*, between *Balbastro* and *Graus*.

The valley of *Gistain*. This valley unites with that of the *Cinca*, near the village of *Salinos*. The river which waters it is called the *Cinquetta*.

The valley of the *Cinca*. This valley is generally

called the valley of *Bielsa* or *Béouse*. Its river, the *Cinca*, has its source at the base of *Mont Perdu*, and it joins the *Ségre* a short distance before the latter unites with the *Ebro*.

The valley of *Brotto*. Its river, the *Arra*, flows into the *Cinca*, near the village of *Ainsa*.

The valley of *Thêne*. Its river, the *Gaillego*, flows into the *Ebro*, near *Sarragossa*.

The valley of *Canfrano*. This valley is watered by the *Aragon*, which at *Alfera*, falls into the *Ebro*.

The valley of *Asia*,

The valley of *Aragues*,

The valley of *Echo*,

The valley of *Anso*,

The valley of *Roncal*,

The valley of *Salazar*,

The valley of *Ahescoa*,

The valley of *Roncevaux*,

The valley of *Erro*:—

The waters of all these valleys flow into the *Aragon*.

The valley of *Heugui*, and that of *Lanz*, unite near *Pampeluna*, and their waters then flow into the *Ebro*.

Thus the whole of the waters which descend from the Spanish Pyreneés, with the exception of those of the *Muga*, the *Ter*, and the *Rigart*, flow into the Ebro. Those again on the French side, flow partly into the ocean and the Mediterranean, by various rivers.

Of the Glaciers in the Pyreneés those of

The *Maladetta*,
The *Crabioules*,
Mont Perdu,
The *Breche de Roland*,
The *Vignemale*, and
The *Neouvielle*, are the most considerable.

The Glacier of the *Maladetta* is situated in Spain, in the upper part of the valley of *Essera*, or *Benasque*, and a few leagues from *Bagnères de Luchon*.

The Glacier of the *Crabioules*, is situated at the head of the little valley of the *Lys*, which opens into that of *Luchon*. This Glacier unites with those of the *Portillon* and *Port d'Oo*.

The Glacier of *Mont Perdu*. This enormous mass of snow and ice is situated in Spain, at the source of the valley of the *Cinca*.

The Glacier of the *Breche de Roland*. This glacier is situated above the famous *Oule* of *Gavarnie*, at the source of the valley of the Lavedan. This glacier unites with that of the *Taillon*.

The Glacier of the *Vignemale*. This glacier is situated at the source of the little valley of *Ossonne*, one of the lateral valleys of the *Lavedan*. There are many inferior glaciers in its vicinity.

The Glacier of *Neouvielle*. This glacier, unlike the others, is at some distance from the central ridge, hanging upon one of the great mountains which

separate the valley of the *Lavedan* from that of *Aure*. It is very difficult to determine the region of perpetual snow, in the Pyreneés. Ramond has fixed it at 1350 or 1400 toises; but there are many mountains of much greater altitude, whose summits during a part of the season are void of snow.

The *Pic du Midi of Bigorre*, for instance, exceeds in height Ramond's region of perpetual snow, by at least 100 toises; and the snow leaves it in the month of August.

The climate of the two extremities of the Pyreneés, is much warmer than that of their central districts. Their proximity to the sea, their comparatively slight elevation above the level of the ocean, and their distance from the great mountains, are the principal cause of the great difference of temperature. The eastern extremity is again much warmer than the western, on account of its more southern situation. In *Roussillon*, we find the olive growing in luxuriance, and many other plants which are not to be met with in other parts of the Pyreneés.

With the exception of the high valleys, the climate is in general very mild in the districts bordering on the Pyreneés. The winter is very short, the cold by no means severe, and the snow which falls, very rarely remains beyond a day or two in the lower valleys. The summers are very warm; too warm for comfort, if the mountains were not near enough to fly to, and avoid them. Thunder-storms are very frequent in the

summer, but are seldom of long duration, and are anxiously expected; as the rains which accompany them greatly cool the atmosphere.

In a climate such as that of the Pyreneés, vegetation cannot be otherwise than very fine, and accordingly we find the most abundant proof of it in all the Pyrenean valleys, whose fertility is perhaps unequalled in the world, and whose exquisite beauties are far too little known by the world.

The Pyreneés abound in mineral springs, many of which have acquired a great celebrity from the cures which they are said to have effected. All the most frequented of the springs are under the superintendence of a physician, employed by the government, and great impartiality is observed in their administration. There is much necessity for this being the case, as often the demand for the waters is far above the supply.

The following are the most noted mineral springs in these mountains.

Bagneres de Bigorre. The period for taking these waters is from April to the end of October.

The springs are numerous, and there are about seventy baths. The most frequented are those of *Santè, Salut, Théas, Pré, Gultiere,* or *Cazeaux.* The others, which are warm springs, are: 1. *La Reine,* or spring of *Bagnerolles,* situated on a hill overlooking the town, and said to be the mother-spring; 2. *Le Dauphin;* 3. *La Nouvelle Fontaine,* belonging to Le Dauphin; 4. *St.*

Roch; 5. The two baths of *Foulon;* 6. *Le Petit Bain,* which is in the town; 7. *La Fontain de Salies;* 8. *Le Petit Prieur;* 9. *Le Bain des Pauvres;* 10. La source d' Artique-*Longue,* now called the *Pinac* waters, after a physician who analyzed and made several interesting observations respecting them. The ferruginous spring of Angoulême rises on a hill to the south-west of Bagnères. The waters are diuretic, aperitive, and tonic, and are said to be efficacious in a great variety of disorders.

Bagneres de Luchon. The warm springs there have long been celebrated, and several Latin inscriptions attest that they were known to the Romans. The waters are taken from May to October; and there is an hospital for the poor. Some of the springs are warm, and others cold. They are called as follows: 1. *La Grotte;* 2. *La Salle;* 3. *Les Romaines;* 4. *Le Rocher;* 5. *La Reine;* this issues from the rock, and has been called by Cam-pardon, the nursery of the waters of Luchon, as four other springs of different temperature rise near it; 6. *La Douce;* 7. *La Chaude à droite;* 8. *La Chaude à gauche;* 9, and 10. *Les Blanches,* separated by two other cold springs; 11 and 12, which are cold and slightly sulphureous.

These springs are situated at the foot of a mountain, near to each other, and are conducted beneath the ground into different reservoirs. The transparent waters look black, as the bottom of the reservoirs are lined with small

slabs of slate; they emit a smell resembling musty eggs; their taste is flat; the action of the air, heat, and light, decomposes these waters, and gives them a milky appearance.

The medicinal properties of these waters bear considerable resemblance to those of Bareges and Cauteretz. They are employed both externally and internally, and are efficacious in chronic rheumatisms, paralysis, catarrh, and various other disorders. When drank, they are taken pure, or mixed with milk.

Contiguous to the springs are sudatories, which are heated by the water which crosses them. These are but little frequented, and persons who go into them cannot remain more than a quarter of an hour, as the air is so hot and thick.

Barèges is celebrated for its mineral waters, which were known to Cæsar and Sertorius, who constructed buildings here worthy of Roman grandeur. Margaret, queen of Navarre, and sister of Francis I. visited these springs; and Henry IV. frequented them in his youth: Montaigne likewise visited them; and their fame was still further augmented by the residence of Madame de Maintenon, with the duke of Maine.

Barèges is annually visited by a great number of persons. The season lasts from May 20th, to October 1st. Louis XV. erected a military hospital at Barèges, in

which an immense number both of officers and soldiers have been healed.

There are three springs, the hot, the temperate, and the tepid, and five Baths, three of which are close together. The names of the baths are: 1. *L' Entrée*; 2. The Great Basin, or Royal Bath; 3. *Le Fond*; 4. *Le Pollard;* 5. *La Chapelle;* or *La Grotte*; which is the highest as to situation. A pump is appropriated to the use of those drinking the waters, and there are two basins, each adapted for fourteen bathers. Although there are springs appropriated exclusively to the baths, the pump, and the douches, yet the waters are but slightly different.

The waters of Barèges are clear, but emit an unpleasant smell. They are particularly famous for healing wounds, and are also used in various disorders. They should be drunk on the spot, as carriage of course destroys their natural heat, and alters some of their properties. They are under the superintendence of a physician. In their effects they are generally aperitive, diuretic, and sudorific.

St. Sauveur. The bathing establishments consist of a douche, and fourteen other baths, which cannot, however, all be filled at the same time, on account of the small quantity of water furnished by the springs. The season commences in May, and ends in October. The lodgings here are commodious.

The mineral waters of St. Sauveur were not known in former times. According to tradition, a bishop of Tarbes, who was exiled at Luz, constructed, in the vicinity of the springs, a small chapel, with the following inscription: "Vos haurietis aquas de fontibus Salvatoris;" and from this inscription, it is said the place derived its name.

The principal spring is situated on a high mountain, from which the water is brought down to the baths by wooden pipes. There are two other springs on the heights.

The waters are taken inwardly for asthma, and obstructions of the viscera; and the baths are employed in rheumatic affections and contractions. The waters are milder than those of Barèges and Cauteretz, and are therefore more adapted to bilious and irritable temperaments.

Cauteretz. There are ten springs. A quarter of a league from this town, on the banks of the Gave, is the spring of *La Baillère*, where there is a saloon with four rooms.

Above the Baths of *Bruzault*, on the mountain towards the east, are the establishments of *Cæsar*; of *Les Espagnols*, also called *La Reine*, and *Pause*, very near each other, and difficult of access. There are also the springs of *Prè*, *Bois*, *Plaa*, *Manhourat*, and *Rieumiset*, or *des Yeux*.

The spring of Cæsar supplies the bottles which are

exported to all parts of France. The price of each bottle is 25 centimes; but visitors may drink at the springs gratuitously; and this is the case at all the springs in the arrondissement. The baths have been gradually improved, particularly at Manhourat and La Raillère.

The waters are efficacious in various cases, particularly in wounds, rheumatism, liver-complaints, intermittent fevers, consumption, ulcers, paralysis, and cutaneous disorders.

In the valley d' Ossan there are several springs of great celebrity; indeed those of the Eaux Bonnes are among the best known; and most frequented in the Pyreneés. They have three different sources; the first is styled *La Vieille;* the second, *La Source Neuve*, and the third, *La source d' Ortech.* The first is the only one which is drunk, and its taste is any thing but agreeable to the palate.

The medicinal properties of these waters acquired great fame for them in ancient times, from the good effects which they wrought upon the Bearnais soldiers who had been wounded at Pavia. It was they who bestowed upon them the name of *Les Eaux d' Arquebusades.* Since those times they have acquired great reputation in curing pulmonary complaints, and individuals aflicted with these diseases, crowd to them from all parts of Europe.

In the adjacent valley, are the Eaux Chaudes, also well known at an early period, and still remarkable for

the cures which they effect. Notwithstanding the frightful approach to these mineral springs, the little court of the kings of Navarre paid them an annual visit; and an inscription carved on the rock which overhangs the most dangerous pass, commemorates the occasion on which the Princess Catherine, sister of Henry IV. entered the wild and secluded valley.

There are five different sources of the Eaux Chaudes, almost all issuing from the granite. The first is called *La Houn deu Rerg;* the second *L'Esquirette;* the third *Le Tron*; the fourth, *L'Aresec*, and the fifth, *Main Vieille.* Their use is recommended in asthmatic complaints, and the baths for paralysis and rheumatisms.

On the road from Bagnères de Bigorre to Montrejean are the mineral springs of Capvern, whose baths, during the period of the Roman dominion in the South of France, were in great request; and now that the inhabitants of the village have erected handsome and comfortable accommodation for visitors, they are daily rising in importance. They are chiefly efficacious in chronic diseases.

In the valley of the Arriège, there are many mineral springs, and several beautifully situated watering places.

The baths of Ussat, near Tarascon, are much frequented. They are particularly efficacious in nervous affections, rheumatisms, and several other diseases.

In the same valley are the mineral springs of Ax, which have been considered of so much importance by the government, that an hospital has been built there for soldiers. They are very efficacious in asthmatic complaints and chronic affections, in paralysis, ulcers, &c.

In the valley of the Ande, is the beautiful little watering place of Aleth. Its springs are efficacious in paralysis, in chronic affections and diseases of the stomach.

In the valley of the Teta, is the charming little watering-place of Vernet, annually crowded with visitors from the south-eastern provinces of France, and the northern parts of Spain. They are chiefly useful as tonics.

In the same valley are the springs of Olette, of the same character as those of Ax. The springs of Las Escaldas in the same neighbourhood, are much the same as those of Barèges, Cauteretz, and the Eaux Bonnes. The baths of Las Escaldas have, from an early period, been much frequented.

In the valley of the Tet, are the mineral springs of Preste, near the Prats de Mollo; and those of Port les Bains, near Arles, the buildings at which last are supposed to have been constructed by the Romans. The springs of Preste have the same properties as those of Las Escaldas.

The waters of Arles are used as tonics, and are bene-

ficial in rheumatisms, paralysis, and old musket-wounds.

There are many other mineral springs in the central and eastern departments of the Pyreneés, besides those already noticed, and some of them, such as those of Aulus and others, of considerable importance.

OF THE BEARNAIS LANGUAGE.

It was the author's intention to have inserted, along with these specimens of Bearnais Poetry, a glossary of the dialect: but the materials from which he would have drawn it up, not being at the present moment within his reach, he has not ventured from his own imperfect knowledge of the language, to supply it. The following illustration of the composition of the dialect may not, however, be deemed uninteresting.

Of the verbs.

In the Bearnais dialect, the verbs—in which consists the true riches of a language—are very numerous. There are always many which express the same idea, at the same time modifying it; thus, besides the verb *brusla* (to burn), we find *cresma, creseca, ari ardé, eslama, ahouegna,* of which the force augments progressively.

Others may also be created at will from almost all the substantives; from *taüle* (table) is formed *taüleya* (to sit

at table); from *ardit* (a *liard*, a small piece of money) is formed *arditeya* (to collect a little money); from *pot* (to kiss) is formed *poutiqueya* (to give kisses), &c., &c.

Their conjugation is easy, regular, and graceful; the different moods are formed without the assistance of the pronouns, *I, thou, he,* &c., which gives a vivacity and rapidity of expression which is not to be found in the French language.

Of the Participles.

The participles are formed by adding to the infinitive the syllables *dou, dé,* or *dis,* in the masculine; *doure, dére,* or *disse* in the feminine. Thus *minya* (to eat), *minyadou, minyadoure,* who eats; minyadé, *minyadére* or *minyadis, minyadisse,* which may, or which ought to be eaten. *Ayma* (to love), *aymadou, amadoure,* who loves, *aymadé, aymadére,* or aymadis, *aymadisse,* who may, or who ought to be loved.

Reflective verbs are formed by the addition of the letter *s* to the termination of the infinitive, separated from it by an apostrophe, which takes the place of the (French) pronoun *se; birouleya* (to turn), *birouleya 's* (to turn one's self).

Of the Substantives and the Adjectives.

The gender of the substantive is easily modified;

which permits of expressions being varied, and also allows of their being rendered more gentle or more strong, according to the circumstances; to effect this, nothing more is required than to make use of a diminutive, or of an augmentative, of which all the substantives are susceptible. Thus *la came* (the leg) is feminine; *la camotte, la camine* (the little leg), are also of the same gender; but *lou camot, lou camét, lou camon*, are of the masculine.

Those words of which the gender is not well determined, may even be changed without having recourse to diminutives or augmentatives; as in *gourg* or *gourgue* (a gathering together of water); *elot* or *elotte* (a ditch); *arram* or *arrame* (a branch); *bruc* or *bruque*, &c., &c.

Of Diminutives and Augmentatives.

Every substantive and adjective has its diminutive and its augmentative, which attaches to these words, at the will of him who employs them, agreeable or disagreeable ideas.

The diminutive is formed by adding to the end of the word the syllables *et, ette,* to express joy, and pleasure; *in, ine,* to express friendship, tenderness, love; *ou, ot, otte,* to express pity or contempt.

The augmentative is formed by adding the syllables *as, asse;* it serves to express hatred, disdain, ridicule, or some disagreeable idea.

Thus from *hemne* (woman) is formed *hemnette* (little woman, agreeable to look at); *hemnine* (pretty little woman, whom one loves); *hemnou*, or hemnotte (poor little woman, whom one pities or despises); *hemnasse* (a gigantic woman; disagreeable; or whom one hates); *hemnassasse* is even sometimes said to augment the force of the expression.

Of the Vowels, and their Pronunciation.

The Bearnais dialect, like the Italian language, owes its sweetness to the great number of vowels which it contains; they form the *finales* of almost all words; their pronunciation is either long or short; soft or strong. The manner in which they are accentuated, indicates the different modulations, constituting that prosody, and that harmony, which renders the Bearnais the most poetic, as well as the most musical dialect of the south of France.

A and *o*, placed at the termination of words, have sometimes a feeble, sometimes a strong sound: those vowels which are strongly sounded, are distinguished by the *accent grave*, *à*, *ò*, sometimes even by doubling the vowel, as plàa (well), còo (heart).

O in the midst of a word is always short: but when placed at the end, it is almost always pronounced long; in this case, it stands for the French *e* mute, and is cut off in the same way as it; this last letter is even made

use of in writing, giving it, however, the pronunciation of the *o*, by prolonging and softening the sound; thus the following words are written *amigue*, *berouyine*, *bouqette*, but they are pronounced *amiguo*, *berouyino*, *bouquetto*.

The *i*, like the *o*, may be sometimes long at the end of a word, but it is short elsewhere; thus it is short in *serbi* (to serve), *mouri* (to die), *mouli* (mill); and it is long in *cerbi* (stag), *que mouli* (I grind), *que'm mouri* (I die); in this last case, the *i* follows the same rules as the *o*, that is to say, it is cut off in the same manner, and forms a feminine termination, whilst it is masculine when short.

In Bearnais, there are only two kinds of *e* known, the *é fermé* and the *è ouvert;* which are distinguished, the first by an accent *aign*, and the second by an accent *grave*. As in these words *tendré* (tender), *tendrè* (tenderness), *abé* (to have), *abbè* (an abbé). But the *é fermé* has two different pronunciations; the one long, and the other short. It is long, for example, in *bedé* (to see), *credé* (to believe), *redé* (stiff), *boulé* (to wish); and it is short in *abé* (to have), *sabé* (to know), *boulé* (the wish). Thus, as has been observed of the vowels *o* and *i*, the *é fermé* forms a masculine termination when it is short, and a feminine termination when long, and it is cut off in the same manner.

The *u* is also pronounced in two ways; like the French *u* in *madu* (a wall), *eadu* (each); and like the Italian *u* in the following words, *paü* (a stake), *seü*

(thirst), *ceü* (heaven), *arrïü* (a book), *pou* (fear); that is to say, as if they were *paou, seou, ceou, arriou, poou;* this last *u* is distinguished by ü.

The letter *h*, preceded by an *l*, takes the place of the French *ll mouillées,* either in the middle or at the end of a word, and is pronounced in the same manner. Thus *hilh* (son), *ailh* (garlic), *tourroülh* (ice), *aülhette* (ewe), *aülhè*, are pronounced in this manner.

SPECIMENS OF BEARNAIS POETRY.

ROUSSIGNOULET qui cantes,
Sus la branque paüsat,
Qu' èt plats, et que t' encantes,
Aüprès de ta mieytat!
Et you plé de tristesse,
Lou cô tout enclabat,
En quitan ma mestresse,
Parti desesperat!

'Ere be pressentibe
Lou die deü parti!
Lou cô que s'em mouribe
De la béde souffri.
D'ûe bouts langourouse,
Dits, m'estregnen la mâ:
" B èn seri malhurouse
Sins calé sépara."

Youb' proumeti, la bère,
D' eb ayma tendremen:
Ma paraüle ey sincère;
Ayat fé soulamen;
Et siat assegurade,
Que, louein d' aquets oueillous,
S' ére ma destinade,
Souffriri mey que bous.

L' ayguette, la plus clare,
L' arriü, lou plus poumpous,
De moun cô quis desglare,
N' esgalen pas lous plous.
Nou-y-a carte, ni libe,
D' û sort ta rigourous:
Arrés nou pot escribe
Ni cantà mas doulous.

Taü coum la Tourterelle,
En quitan soun pariou,
Moun cô toustem fidelle,
Saüneye à soun amou.
Oubyet de ma tendresse,
Aü noum de l' amistat,
Plagnet lou quib adresse
Soun darré adichat!

Moun doux amic s'en ba parti
S'en ba ta la Rouchelle;
Que herey you soulette acy
Oh! Milice cruelle!
Que herey you? quem baü mouri,
Louein de moun cô fidelle.

Beütat, esprit, lon me Pastou
Ben abé d'impourtance;
Bère taille et boune fayçou
Quoan se targabe en danse,
Et tà plà parla de l'amou
N'abé pariou en France.

En m'enbrassan eth me digou,
Lous oueilhs tous plés de larmes:
Soubiente de toun serbidou
Qui ba pourta las armes,
En tà merita toun amou.
Diü las tristes allarmes!

Lou mati qui aü sort cadou;
Eth me disé: " Beroye,
De serbi lou Rey moun Seignou
Ben aüri la grand yoye
Si n' ére pas la toue doulou
Qu' im hé mouri de roye."

Lou plus aymable deüs galans
You l' ey pergut praübette,
Adichat flous, adiü ribans,
Adiü douces flourettes;
You baü passa mouns plus bets ans
Chens plasés amourettes.

Lous ciseüs que l' amic m' a dat
Et la bague daürade
Dessus moun sé seran plaçats
En aqueste journade,
De mouns plous seran arrousats
Dinquò qu' em sic secade.

Gran Diü qui bedet moun turmen,
Qué counechet ma peine,
Het—me rebede soulemen
L' oubyet qui m' encadène;
Après, sat beye, prountamen;
Het mouri Matalène.

Moun Diü quine souffrence,
M'as-tu caüsat!
Dab quine indifférence
M'as-tu quittat!
Quoan disés que m'aymabes
Ta tendremen,
Labets tu qu'em troumpabes
Crûelemen,
Et qu'êt félicitabes
De moun tourmen!

Deüs qui tan fréquantade,
Noun'y a nat, nou,
Qui t'ayé tan aymade
Coum hasi you.
Et per recounéchence,
Bé m'as trahit!
Més moun maü dab l'absence
Bé s'ey goârit;
Yutye daquiü, et pense
Ço qui m'an dit.

L' amou lou plus sincère
Non t' ey d' arré :
Qu' aymes d' esta leüyére,
Quey toun plazé ;
D' aïtes s' y soun pecades,
Chens pensa maü :
Que las an cayoulades
Bet drin coum caü :
Après las an léchades,
Ataü, ataü.

Mès you coum t' aymi hère,
Bouy t' aberti,
Sin es à tems encoucère,
Abise-t' y :
U moumen de feblesse
Pot arriba ;
Non seras pas mestresse
De refusa ;
Ni mey per toun adresse,
Deü répara.

Léche dounc, sim bos créde,
Aquet garçou,
Qui souben té bien béde,
Coum hasi you.

Pren garde à la glissade,
Lou pas qu' ey dous ;
Sit lhébabes troumpade,
Quines doulous !
Abise-t' y maynade :
Gare lous plous !

Adichat, las mies amous,
La bère Margalide :
En gouardan lous agnerous,
Sib seret marfandide ?

—Non certes, moun amic dous,
You moun soy marfandide :
Més l'ayguette de l' arrous,
Que m' a drin refresquide.

Lou hâsà n' abé cantat,
Que las mies oüillettes
You tirabi deü clédat,
Per bous mas amoúrettes.

—You b' èri soü tucoulet
A l' aübette deü die ;
Non-y-a que bous amiguet
Qu' im desset facherie.

Lous montous de rouy pintrats,
Lous trucs de las esquères,
Ben héran brut, s'a Diü plats
Capbat las arribères.

—Biram, biram lou bestià,
Per acéres endostes :
Tu qu' as burre, you qu' ey pà,
Qu' ens heram senglés rostes.

Péchet, péchet, agnerous,
Péchet, mas oüillettes.
En broustan aquestes flous,
You qu' eb léchi soulettes.

—Et tu, petit Diü d'amous,
Qui boles per lous aïres,
Ayes soueïn deüs amourous,
Et lou troupet qu'em gouaytes.

—Adichat, dinqu' à douma ;
Qu' em biret plâ l'aoüillade ;
Are, noum pouch mey triga ;
Que seri trop cridade.

HEIGHTS OF THE MOST REMARKABLE PLACES IN THE PYRENEES.

A toise is about six feet four inches English measure.

	Toises.
PERPIGNAN	10
CERET (bridge of), small town in the valley of the Tech	50
ARLES, a small town in the same valley	142
MONTFERET, village in the same valley	401
CANIGOU (mountain), between the valley of the Tech and that of the Teta	1442
MOSSET (mountain), between the valleys of the Teta and of the Aude, a little to the west of the Col de la Marguerite	1236
ROC BLANC (mountain), at the head of the valley of the Aude	1302
PIC PEYRIE, or PIC DE PRIGUE, at the head of the Gorge d'Orlu, between the valley of the Teta and that of Arriège	1427
PIC LANOUX, upon the ridge of the high chain, at	

	Toises.
the head of the valley of Arriege.....	1466
Pic Pedrous, upon the ridge of the high chain, a short distance to the east of the Port de Puymorens at the head of the valley of the Arriége	1490
Pic de Fontargente, on the ridge of the high chain, at the head of the little valley of Asson in the valley of the Arriége	1447
Pic de la Serrere, on the ridge of the high chain, at the head of the same little valley....	1515
Pic du Port de Siguier, upon the ridge of the high chain, at the head of the little valley of Siguier.....	1504
Port de Rat, at the head of the valley of Vicdessos	1169
Montcalm, upon the ridge of the high chain, in the valley of Vicdessos	1660
Vicdessos.....	362
Port de Lherz, at the head of the little valley of Suc	778
Lake of Lherz	643
Suc, village in the little valley of Suc.....	487
Sem, village in the valley of Vicdessos	492
Entrance to the mine of Rancie, called *L'Auriette*	641
Entrance to the mine of Rancie, called *Crauque*	700
Summit of the mountain of Rancie.....	820

	Toises.
PIC, OR CAP D'ENDRON, at the head of the little valley of Sem	1053
COL DE LA COUILLADE, between the little valley of Suc and that of Gourbit	1016
ETANG-BLAU, small lake at the upper part of the little valley of Gourbit	921
PRAT D'EMBANS, valley of Gourbit	759
PLATEAU DE CAUTIES, in the same valley	486
PIC DE SAINT BARTHELEMY, in the valley of Arriége	1190
TARASCON, valley of Arriége	237
FOIX, chief town of the department of Arriége	192
SAINT-PAUL DE JARRAT, valley of the Arriége	224
PIC DE MONT VALLIER, upon the ridge of the high chain, at the head of the valley of Sallat	1440
MASSAT, town in the little valley of Soulan	303
SAINT-GIRONS, valley of the Sallat	211
ANGOUMER, village in the valley of Castillon	232
MAZ D'AZIL, little valley of Larize	135
SAINTE-CROIX, between this valley and that of the Sallat	126
PIC DE MONTOULIOU, or TUC DE MAUBERME, upon the ridge of the high chain, at the head of the valley of Castillon	1468
MOUNTAIN OF CRABERE, at the head of the little valley of Melles	1354
MONTARTO, or PIC DE RIOUS, upon the ridge of	

	Toises.
the high chain to the south of Artiés, in the valleé d'Arran	1509
PORT DE VIELLA, upon the ridge of the high chain	1286
ETANG DU TORO	1034
VIELLA, chief town of the valley d'Arran	452
SAINT BEAT, in the valley of the Garonne	276
PIC DE GAR, near Saint Béat	937
BAGNERES DE LUCHON	314
PORTILLON DE BURBE, between the valley of Luchon and that of Arran	644
HOPITAL DE BAGNERES, at the foot of the Port de Venasque	696
PORT DE LA PICADE, at the head of the valley of Luchon	1243
PORT DE VENASQUE	1238
LAKE OF THE PORT DE VENASQUE	1137
PORT DE LA GLERE, to the west of the above mentioned	1192
PRAT DE JOUO, in the little valley of the Port de la Glère	490
CRABIOULES, upon the ridge of the high chain at the head of the valley de Lys	1650
TUQUE DE MAUPAS, in the same valley	1615
SUPERBAGNEROS, mountain above Bagnères remarkable for its fine view	896
MALADETTA (highest summit of), called the Pic d'Anethou	1787

	Toises.
Inaccessible ridge to the west of the Pic d'Anethou	1627
Foot of the Glacier of the Maladetta (10th of September, 1811)	1371
LAC D'ALBE	1135
Edge of the Gouffre de Tourmon	1069
Cabin at the PLAIN DES ETANGS, at the foot of the Maladetta	922
Pic ar MAIL DE POUIS, or PIQUE FOURCANADE.	1569
HOPITAL DE VENASQUE	875
TUQUE DE CIEYO, little valley of Astos of Benasque	1400
PIC POSET, or LAS POSETS, opposite to the Port d'Oo upon the south side	1764
PUNTA DE LARDANA, or PIC D'IRRE, between the valleys of Essera and of Gistain	1336
PORT D'OO, at the head of the valley de Larboust.	1540
Frozen LAKE OF THE PORT D'OO	1361
LAC D'ESPINGO, in the valley of Larboust	932
Head of the CASCADE OF SECULEJO, in the valley of Larboust	878
Lac de Seculéjo	718
PLAINE D'ASTOS of Oo	564
PIC QUAIRAT, between the valleys of Larboust and of Lys	1585
PIC DE MONTAROUYE, a little to the north of the Pic Quairat	1438
PIC DE HERMICANS, between the valleys of Lar-	

	Toises.
boust and of Lourou	1554
PORT DE PEYRESOURDE, between the valleys of Larboust and of Louron	788
LA SERRE DE SAINTE-PAUL, between the valley of Oueil and Luchon	962
PORT DE LAPEZ, at the head of the valley of Louron	1265
PIC DE BATOA, or BIEDOUS, between the port of Lapez and that of Plan	1566
PORT DE PLAN, at the head of the little valley of Rioumajou, in the valley of Aure	1151
SERRE D'AZET, between the valley of Louron and that of Aure	804
VILLAGE OF SAINT LARY, in the valley of Aure	400
PIC D'ARRE (the higher), in the valley d'Aure	1504
——— (the lower)	1485
PIC DE BAROUDE, upon the ridge of the high chain at the head of the valley d'Aure	1532
PLAN D'ARRAGNOUET, last village of the valley d'Aure	684
HOPITAL DE PLAN, in the valley of Gistain	768
SAINT-JEAN, chief town of the valley of Gistain	573
Junction of the CINCETTE (torrent of the valley of Gistain) with the CINCA	392
BIELSA, in the valley of the Cinca	514
NOTRE-DAME DE PINEDE, at the head of the valley of the Cinca, and the nearest habitation	

	Toises.
to Mont Perdu	667
PORT-VIEL, between the valley of the Cinca and that of Estaubé	1314
PORT DE PINEDE	1291
LAKE OF MONT PERDU, estimated at	1300
COL DE NISCLE or of FANLO, opposite the Port de Pinède	291
MONT PERDU	1747
CYLINDRE DU MARBORE	1729
PIC DE LA CASCADE	1681
TOUR DU MARBORE	1569
BRECHE DE ROLAND	1542
LE TAILLON, between the Breche de Roland and the Port de Gavarnie	1649
PLAIN OF MILLARIS, upon the south side of the Marboré	1194
ENTRANCE TO THE VALLEY OF ODESSA	556
CIRQUE D'ESTAUBE, at the head of the valley of Estaubé	931
BORNE DE TUQUE ROUYE, at the head of the same valley	1220
BRECHE DE TUQUE ROUYE	1490
COL DE PIMENE, or BRECHE D'ALLANS, between the valley of Zavadan and that of Estaube	1291
GRANGE DE GARGANTAN, at the entrance of the valley of Estaubé	902
NOTRE DAME DE HEAS, in the valley of Hèas	740

	Toises.
Foot of the PORT DE LA CANAU and the CIRQUE DE TROUMOUSE	1060
MOUNTAIN OF TROUMOUSE	1642
PIC D'AIGUILLON, between the valley of Héas and that of Aure	1523
HOSPICE DE BOUCHARO, in the valley of Brotto	741
PORT OF GAVARNIE, or of BOUCHARO	1172
LAKE OF LOUBASSOU, at the upper part of the valley des Epessières	1131
COMMENCEMENT OF THE CASCADE OF GAVARNIE	1166
CIRQUE DE GAVARNIE, or HOULE DU MARBORE, at the foot of the cascade	985
GAVARNIE (village of), in the valley of the Lavedan	735
GEDRE (village of), in the valley of the Lavedan	546
PIC DE CAMPBIEL, between the valley of Aure and that of Lavedan	1660
PORT DE CAMPBIEL	1333
PIC LONG, between the valley of Aure and that of Lavedan	1656
PIC DE NEOUVIELLE, between the little valley of Couplan, and the valley of Bastan	1616
PIC DE BERGONS	1108
PIC D'EYRE	1267
PIC D'ARBIZON, at the head of the valley of Campan	1460
SAINT-SAUVEUR (baths of) in the valley of Lavedan	395

	Toises.
Luz (town of), in the same valley, at the entrance of the valley of Bastan	379
Bareges, in the valley of the Bastan	658
Col du Tourmalet, at the head of this valley	1126
Pic du Midi de Bigorre	1493
Pic de Montaigu	1192
Penna de Lherys, in the valley of Campan	820
Pierrefittes (village), in the valley of Lavedan	260
Argellez	241
Lourde, town at the entrance of the valley of the Lavedan	211
Vignemale, at the head of the valley of Cauterez and of the little valley of Ossonne upon the ridge of the high chain	1721
Pic de Badescure, at the head of the little valley of Bun	1615
Pic d'Arrieugrand, at the extremity of the valley of Azun	1541
Pic, or Som de Soube	1607
Pic du Midi d'Ossau	1531
Pic d'Aule, to the north-west of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau	1505
Pic d'Anie, upon the ridge of the high chain between the valley d'Aspe and that of Soule	1326
Mountain of Orhi, upon the ridge of the high chain at the head of the valley of Soule	1031
Orsan-Sourrietta (mountain of)	801

	Toises.
MOUNTAIN OF HAUSA, between the valley of Baigorry and that of Bastan	667
MOUNTAIN OF HAYA, or of QUATRE-COURONNES in the Guipuzcoa	500
MOUNTAIN OF AISQUIBEL, upon the sea-coast, between Bidassoa and the Port du Passage	278
TARBES	150
TOULOUSE (Place Royale)	73

APPENDIX.

EXPLANATION OF CERTAIN TERMS PECULIAR TO THE PYRENEES.

Cacou—The most simply constructed cabin of the shepherds.

Chaos—confused heaps of immense rocks.

Cirque—the circular basin inclosed by vast precipices, found at the source of many valleys.

Core—Small *Port* or passage.

Couïla—Cabin of the shepherds of the Hautes Pyrenées.

Couret—The course of a river when it leaves a lake.

Courtaou—Cabin of the shepherds of the Couserans.

Estibe—Fine meadows.

Gave—Generic name for rivers in Bigorre and Bearne.

Hourque, Hourquette—A little port or passage in Bigorre.

Mail—Mountain in the valleys of the Garonne.

Neste—Generic name for rivers in Bigorre.

Oule—Local name for the *Cirques*.

Orris—Shepherds' cabin in the county of Foix.

Pene—The extreme point of a mountain.

Pouey, Puch, Pech, Puy, &c.—Mountain.

Raillere—Space covered with fragments of fallen rock.

Ramade—Great flocks.

Roule—The trunk of a tree meant to be sawed.

Sarre, Serre, Serrat—Mountain.

Seoube—Forest.

Tuc, Tuque—Mountain.

Turon—Little hillock.

END OF VOL. II.

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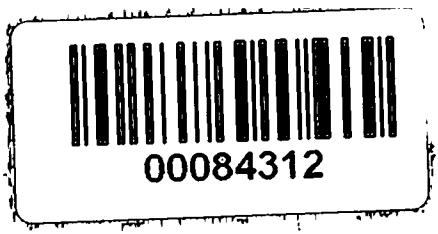
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